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AUTHORITY IN THE NEW
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AUTHORITY IN THE NEW CHURCH

BY THE

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MINISTER OF THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH, CAMDEN ROAD, LONDON



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PREFACE.

THE greater portion of the following pages was read before the Conference of New Church ministers in America which was held in Frankford, near Philadelphia, during the first week of June 1876. After the reading, the following action was taken by the Conference :—

“The Conference of Ministers having listened with great interest and attention to the reading of a large portion of Dr. Tafel’s paper on ‘Authority in the New Church,’ it was unanimously resolved that the members of the Conference extend to Dr. R. L. Tafel their hearty thanks for his very thorough paper on ‘Authority in the New Church,’ and while regretting that time will not allow them to hear the whole of the paper, they would express an earnest desire that the paper may be set before the whole Church by publication ; and that Dr. Tafel may also find time [to edit and publish with the paper a full index to its contents.”

By a subsequent resolution, a committee of three was appointed to carry out the purpose of the above resolution. This committee submitted the following motion to the decision of the Conference :—

“On considering the subject referred to them, the Committee have come to the conclusion, in view of the importance of Dr. Tafel’s paper, that it should be recommended for publication to the Board of Publication. They therefore ask the signatures of the members of Conference to the request appended hereto.

(Signed)	J. R. HIBBARD,	} Committee.”
	JOSEPH PETTEE,	
	T. A. PLANTZ,	

The request of the Committee resulted in the following application being addressed to the Board of Publication :—

“ The undersigned members of the Conference of Ministers respectfully recommend the paper of Rev. R. L. Tafel on ‘ Authority in the New Church ’ to the Board of Publication for publication.

(Signed)	WM. B. HAYDEN.	SABIN HOUGH.
	JOSEPH A. LAMB.	F. H. HEMPERLEY.
	N. C. BURNHAM.	JABEZ FOX.
	L. P. MERCER.	S. S. SEWARD.
	CHAUNCEY GILES.	SAML. M. WARREN.
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	E. C. MITCHELL.	W. H. HINKLEY.
	WM. M. GOODNER.	F. W. TUERK.
	L. H. TAFEL.	SAML. BESWICK.”

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CHAPTER I.

AUTHORITY IN GENERAL.

AUTHORITY is a necessary, yea, an indispensable consequence of order ; for order is an harmonious arrangement of parts, of which those that are like are associated together or co-ordinated, and those which are lower are placed under or subordinated to those which are higher.

The most perfect system of order, and hence the most perfect arrangement of parts, is presented by the human body, where like parts are associated or co-ordinated so as to compose the various members or organs of the body, and where the extremities are subordinated to the trunk or the body proper, and the body to the head. And as we are taught that everything in the natural as well as in the spiritual universe has reference to man, and hence to the human form, it follows that everywhere, both in the worlds of matter and of spirit, like parts are co-ordinated and lower parts subordinated to higher ; whence it further follows that the principle of co-ordination and subordination is inherent in the very order of things, and that without this principle creation, and hence the worlds of matter and of spirit, would be an impossibility.

Order, therefore, and hence the principle of co-ordination and subordination, in a true sense, is the very condition of our creation and our continued existence. This principle also, which includes an acknowledgment of the principle of authority, has been regarded from time immemorial as indispensable to the welfare of the human race ; for everywhere, in all relations of life, whenever there is work to be done or danger to be averted, or whenever the welfare of mankind is to be placed on a firm and secure foundation, mankind instinctively introduce a form of order in which some parts are invested with the duty or the right of governing, and in which the duty of other parts consists in obeying. The principle of authority, therefore, has been acknowledged by mankind at all times as indispensable to its welfare, and as its only salvation from a state of anarchy and of public and private disorder. Upon order finally, and hence upon the proper co-ordination and subordination of parts in the natural and the spiritual universe, the very presence of the Lord in our midst depends ; for we read :—

(1.) “The Lord is order itself ; wherefore, wherever the Lord is present, there is order ; and [on the other hand] wherever there is order [*i.e.* wherever a just principle of co-ordination and subordination prevails], there the Lord is present ” (*A. C.* 5703).

The principle of authority, therefore, is a heavenly and Divine principle, and is inherent in the very order according to which the universe has been created ; and upon this principle the welfare of the Lord’s kingdom in heaven and on earth, and thus the welfare of the Church upon earth, and notably the welfare of

the Lord's New Church upon earth, depend. In order, therefore, that the Lord's New Church may be established, and that it may prosper upon earth, it must have a distinct authority to which all its parts, *i.e.* all its members, must bow, and its welfare and prosperity depend altogether upon the obedience which its parts or members yield to this authority.

As in heaven there is one Head, one Source of authority to which all the parts of heaven, *i.e.* all angels, bow, so also in the Church upon earth there must be one authority to which all the members of the Church must bow; and in proportion as they bow to this one authority, they are in a state of order, and the Lord can be with them, and strengthen and establish the Church by their means.

While acknowledging the necessity of a fixed authority in the Church, it may here be retorted that the Church which the Lord establishes among men is an internal state, that it is the conjunction of goodness and truth in the hearts of men which results from a proper subordination of man to his Maker; but that this has nothing to do with an outward or external organization of men in this world, styling itself a Church, or claiming for itself the name of the Lord's New Church.

A complete answer to this objection is furnished by the analogous case of the Lord's kingdom in heaven; for heaven also is an internal state, or according to the Lord's words, "is within us," and according to the doctrines of the New Church this internal state is a conjunction of goodness and truth. But although heaven is an internal state, it is at the

same time an external organization; wherefore Swedenborg defines heaven (*H. H.* 1) as composed of angels, and he thereby declares angels to be the parts of which heaven is the aggregate.

On the same principle, we hold that although the Church is defined as an internal state resulting from a conjunction of goodness and truth in man, it is at the same time an external organization; and we conclude that as heaven is composed externally of angels, so the Church, or the Lord's kingdom upon earth, is composed externally of men. Yet according to the quality of the men such will be the quality of the external Church organization which they form, according to these words:—

(2.) “The spiritual man is a Church in particular, and several together are the Church in general. Unless man in particular were a Church, there would not be a Church in general. The congregation in general is commonly called a Church; but in order that it may be a Church, every one in the congregation must be a Church. Each general involves parts similar to itself” (*A. C.* 4292).

From this extract it follows that the Church is not only an internal state in the individual, but also that it is an external organization formed of a plurality of individuals. These individuals, however, in order to be parts of the Church in general, must have the Church in themselves; that is, they must be conjoined to the Lord by acknowledging Him as their authority, and by subordinating their own life to the Lord's life.

Concerning the Church at large, we read that in the eyes of the Lord it appears as one man; from which it follows that all those principles which apply to the

Church in the individual apply also to the Church at large. And from this it follows further, that as the Church in the individuals is established by their acknowledging the Lord as their authority, and subordinating their own life to the Lord's life; so, also, in order to establish the Church at large it is absolutely necessary that its members should have a fixed and final authority to which they all look, and by which they are willing to be judged, and which thus may become a common bond to unite the members of the Church in one homogeneous fraternity.

The question now arises, Where, and what, is that ultimate authority to which all the members of the Lord's Church at large, and especially the members of the Lord's New Church, should look, and by which they ought to be willing to be judged?

It is unpopular to speak of an authority which New Churchmen as such ought to acknowledge. This acknowledgment of an authority, in the eyes of some, seems to conflict with the principle of spiritual freedom which ought to prevail in the New Church, and which they see taught in its watchword, "Now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith." And yet, unless the members of the New Church acknowledge one final and ultimate authority, and unless they are willing to conform the life of their will and of their understanding to this authority, the New Church will neither grow in them, nor will it grow in the general bodies or external organization which they form in conjunction with other men.

The great power and strength of the Roman Catholic Church lies in this circumstance, that they have a

common authority to which they all bow, and by which they all become soldiers of one grand army bent upon establishing their religion among mankind.

Our purpose in adverting here to the strength and power of the Roman Catholic Church is a twofold one ; for, on the one hand, it furnishes an instance of the power a Church acquires when it acknowledges a final and ultimate authority, and, on the other, it furnishes a clue to the reluctance and opposition which some in the New Church have to such a final and ultimate authority in the Church.

In the Roman Catholic Church the final authority in all matters belonging to the Church is a human being, whose utterances in respect to the Church are declared to be infallible, and thus of Divine authority ; and this is supposed to be the necessary and unavoidable consequence of a belief in a final and ultimate authority in all matters pertaining to the Church. For this reason, also, such a determined resistance has been made of late to a regularly ordained ministry in the external New Church, every ordained minister being considered as a pope in disguise, or as a pope in a state of incipency.

All this opposition, however, we believe, arises from a misapprehension of the nature of the final authority in the Church. It is supposed that this final authority is claimed to be vested in the persons of the ordained ministers of the Church. We admit that this claim is set up in the Roman Catholic Church, and to some extent also in the Anglican Church, by the dogma of the Apostolic Succession. But we hold that this is a perversion of the true doctrine respecting authority

in the Church, and that this perverted doctrine has nothing whatever to do with the true doctrine.

The true doctrine of authority in the Church leads its members into spiritual freedom, and not into spiritual slavery ; and the true authority of the Church is the very strongest bulwark against an abuse of its authority by those who administer the government of the Church in this world.

We see, therefore, that there may be true order in the Church or perverted order, and hence that there may be a true principle of subordination and authority in the Church or a perverted principle. This difference we shall now endeavour to point out.

All authority in this world is exercised by persons ; so we read :—

(3.) “Order cannot be preserved in the world without superiors or heads, whose duty it is to notice everything that takes place according to order and against order.” And further—“Among the superiors, again, there must be order, lest any one at his good pleasure, or from ignorance, allow evils to take place which are opposed to order, and by which order is destroyed ; which is guarded against when there are superiors, higher and lower, in authority, among whom there is subordination.” And finally—“The superiors who have charge of the things of heaven, or of ecclesiastical things among men, are called *priests*, and their office is called the *priesthood*” (*H. D.* 312-314 ; *A. C.* 10,790-10,793). In like manner we read again—“The things of the world, or civil things, are administered by magistrates, and by kings where such forms of government exist” (*H. D.* 314).

But does it follow from this that priests are the *sources* of authority and power in the Church, and kings and magistrates in the State ? Or does it follow from this that the will and the thought of the priests form the ultimate authority in the Church, and

the will and thought of the magistrates and the king in the State? This question is answered in the affirmative by the Roman Catholics, who believe in an infallible pope, whose will and thought is their authority in all matters pertaining to the Church; it is also answered in the affirmative by those who believe that bishops and priests assembled in conventions or convocations are infallible, and that the findings of such councils are the final and ultimate authority in the Church.

This question is also answered in the affirmative on the civil plane by those who teach and uphold a personal or despotic government, and who believe that the will and thought of the emperor or king is the final authority in matters of a civil or political nature.

This question is, however, answered in the negative by the writings of the New Church, and by all those who believe what these writings teach; and it is also answered in the negative by all those who believe that the law and the constitution of a land are an authority above the magistrates and the political rulers of a land, and who believe that the laws and the constitution of a land are the ultimate and final authority to which every officer of the State and every governor of the land must bow.

The law, and the sacred observance of the law, are the salvation of a land; and where the laws of a land are administered fairly, honestly, and energetically, there the citizens live in peace, and there the power of malefactors and criminals is broken and annihilated. But where the laws are not respected, and where the balances of justice are in the hands of unprincipled

and ignorant men, there crime increases, and the interests of the public are sacrificed to the interests of individuals. In such a land order is inverted, and the servant is made the ruler, and the ruler the servant : for when true order prevails in a land the laws are the rulers, and the governors and prefects are the servants and executors of the laws ; but when true order is perverted in a land, then the officers and governors become the rulers, and the laws are the servants by which they enforce their wills.

The same case has happened, and may happen again in the Church ; for in the Church also, as we have seen, power and authority are exercised by persons or individuals. If these persons regard the law of the Church as superior to themselves, and if they in all matters of the Church consult this law, and act strictly in accordance with this law, without looking either to the right or to the left, then these persons are good and faithful servants in the eyes of the Lord, and the Lord speeds the work of their hands, and blesses all their efforts in the establishment of His Church upon earth.

But if the servants, *i.e.* the priests, make themselves superior to the law of the Church, either by denying that there is such a law, or by undermining and reasoning away its authority, in that case order in the Church becomes inverted, the servant becomes the ruler, and the ruler—that is, the law of the Church—becomes a mere instrument in the hands of the priests, by which they seek to establish their own rule over the members of the Church. Such has been the case in the first Christian Church ; it has become perverted

and destroyed because its ministers and priests set themselves above the law of the Church, and so shaped and perverted it that by means of it their own authority became established over the consciences of men. Such also will inevitably be the case in the New Church, unless it acknowledge a law which is above or superior to the persons of those who compose the Church, and its downfall will be hastened unless such a law be acknowledged and submitted to by those who are its governors and leaders.

The question now arises, Is there such a law in the New Church to which both its clergy and its laity must bow?

If we ask this question of the natural man, he will at once answer that he acknowledges no law by which the consciences of men are to be bound; for the natural man is impatient of restraint, and does not wish to be limited in the enjoyment of the natural loves of self and of the world. Nay, in order to prove the position that the consciences of men are free, the natural man goes to the writings of the Church, and fortifies himself with the statement, oft quoted of late, "*Nunc licet!*—Now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith."

If we ask this question of the spiritual man, who on all points of doctrine, *i.e.* on all points concerning the Church and man's spiritual welfare, goes to the writings of the Church, we obtain a different answer altogether.

He first proves the necessity of a law as a final authority in the Church by referring us to *T. C. R.* 55, where we read:—

(4.) "Who cannot see that it is impossible for an empire, a kingdom, a duchy, a republic, a town, or a house to exist, unless it is established by laws which constitute the order and form of its government? In every one of these the laws of justice are in the highest place, those for the government of the State, or political laws, in the second, and those for the government of the houses, or economical laws, in the third; and if they are compared to a human being, the laws of justice form the head, political laws the body, and economical laws the garments, wherefore also these like garments may be changed. With respect to the order, however, into which the Church has been established by God, this order is such that God must be in each and everything belonging to it, and this order must be exercised in respect to the neighbour. There are as many laws of this order as there are truths in the Word; the laws which have respect to the Lord ought to constitute its head, those that have respect to the neighbour its body, and ceremonies ought to constitute its garments; for unless the latter hold the former in their order, it would be as if the body were laid bare, and exposed to the heat in summer and to the cold in winter, or as if the walls and ceilings were taken away from a temple, whereby the sanctuary, the altar, and the pulpit, by being exposed for a long time, became a prey to various kinds of violence."

From this passage we learn that there is no order without laws, and consequently that there can be no order in the Church without laws. We learn also that the laws of the Church, on the one hand, have respect to the Lord and to the neighbour, and thus to internal worship, and, on the other hand, to ceremonies, and thus to external worship.

We further learn that there are as many laws of order in the Church as there are truths in the Word. We read further:—

(5.) "As priests are the governors or heads who are to administer those things which belong to *Divine law* and worship, so kings and magistrates are the officers for the administration of those things which belong to *civil law* and to judgment." And again—"The royal power consists in governing according to the laws of the land, and in judging

according to them from a principle of justice. A king who has respect to the laws as above himself is wise; but he who regards himself as superior to the laws is not wise. A king who has respect to the laws as above himself places the royal power or authority in the law, and the law rules over him; for he knows that the law is justice, and that all justice which is justice is Divine. But a king who regards himself as above the laws places the royal authority in himself, and thinks either that he himself is the law, or that the law which is justice is from himself. Hence he arrogates to himself what is Divine, when yet he ought to be subordinated to it" (*H. D.* 319, 322).

There is exactly the same relation between the Divine law, or the law of the Church and the ministers, as there is between it and every other member of the Church. The law of the Church teaches them everything respecting internal and external worship; and their duty as members of the Church consists in carrying out this law and in obeying it; and they ought not to place themselves above the law of the Church, and to declare either that their own will is the law of the Church, or that the law of the Church is derived from themselves. Or, in other words, the members of the Church, and especially its ministers, must believe that everything respecting internal and external worship has been revealed to them from God out of heaven, and that nothing respecting internal and external worship must be derived from themselves.

The downfall of the first Christian Church was caused by the men, and especially the ministers, of the Church placing themselves above the laws of the Church, all of which are truths from the Word, and by declaring that they themselves, *i.e.* the ministry of the Church, are in the place of a law to the Church;

and further, that all the laws of the Church are derived from themselves. And to such a danger the Church of the New Jerusalem would be exposed by not acknowledging a law superior to itself ; *i.e.* a law which is not man-made, but which has been revealed from God out of heaven.

The question now arises, Where is the law which both the clergy and the laity in the Church of the New Jerusalem ought to be willing to acknowledge ?

The answer to this question is : The law of the Church of the New Jerusalem "in respect to the Lord, in respect to the neighbour, and in respect to the ceremonies of the Church," are the doctrines of the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture, which have been revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming for the special benefit of this Church, and which are contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

This is the law which the Church of the New Jerusalem as an outward organization must acknowledge, and before which all those in authority must bow.

Let us be thankful that we have a law in our Church, a law to which we can go for light as to our duties towards God and towards our neighbour, and a law to which we can go for instruction in everything concerning the external worship or the ceremonies of the Church ; for in revealing this law for the New Church the Lord was mindful of every want of His people, and whoever seeks will surely find there what he needs.

We are aware that in claiming the authority of a

law for the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word as taught in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, we expose ourselves to criticisms and objections on various sides. We shall endeavour to answer these objections in order.

CHAPTER II.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH NOT HUMAN BUT DIVINE.

THE *first* objection is : By declaring the doctrines of the New Church as contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg to be the law, and thus the final authority in the New Church, you make them equal to the Word of God, and thus of Divine authority.

To this we unhesitatingly reply : We do believe and acknowledge that the doctrines of the New Church which are contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are of Divine authority ; and we believe and acknowledge them to be of Divine authority, because the Lord in and by these doctrines has effected His Second Coming upon earth. We believe, further, that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are the doctrines of the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture ; yea, we believe that these doctrines are the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture itself in a form accommodated to the rational understanding of mankind.

In order to accommodate the doctrines of the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture to the rational

understanding of men, the Lord revealed these doctrines to the rational mind of Swedenborg; and in order to enable him to receive these doctrines from the Lord, according to his own statement, Swedenborg "was prepared by the Lord for his work from his earliest youth" (*T. C. R.* 850).

After receiving the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, or the doctrines of the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture, in his rational mind, Swedenborg was commissioned by the Lord to make them known to the world by the press. This we are taught in these words:—

(6.) "As the Lord cannot manifest Himself in person, and yet foretold that He would come again and establish a New Church which is the New Jerusalem, it follows that He would do this by a man who could not only receive the doctrines of that Church by his understanding, but also publish them by the press." And this man, as it is further declared, was Swedenborg himself (*T. C. R.* 779).

From this it follows that the Lord's Second Coming was effected by a man—yea, by means of the man Swedenborg; and that the Lord's Second Coming was effected by Swedenborg's "receiving the doctrines of the New Jerusalem by his understanding, and publishing them by the press." So that the Lord effected His Second Coming in and by means of those works which Emanuel Swedenborg published by the press. That this is meant in the Apocalypse by the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven is proved by the superscriptions to Nos. 779 and 781 in *T. C. R.*, when read in consecutive order:—

(7.) "The Lord's Second Advent takes place by a man, before whom He manifested Himself in person, and whom He filled with His Spirit,

so that he might teach the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from Himself. This is meant in the Apocalypse by the new heaven and the new earth, and the New Jerusalem descending thence."

From this it follows that, in writing those works which he afterwards published, Swedenborg "*was filled by the Spirit of God*," and thus was *inspired*, so that what he wrote was from the Lord, and not from himself. It follows, also, that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg are meant in the Apocalypse by "the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven." And it follows, further, that the contents of these writings come to us with Divine and not with human authority, and that the publication of these writings in this world constitutes the Lord's Second Coming, which was promised in the letter of the Word. That Swedenborg, in writing his theological works, wrote from inspiration is further taught in the heading to the *Coronis*, No. 18, where we read:—

(8.) "The Lord Jehovah from the New Heaven derives and produces a New Church upon earth, which takes place by means of a revelation of truths from His mouth or from His Word, and by *inspiration*."

Likewise in the following passage:—

(9.) "The internal sense differs altogether from the literal sense; for it treats of spiritual and heavenly, but the literal sense of worldly and earthly, things. That the internal sense, however, is such as it has been expounded, appears from the particulars that have been explained, and especially from this circumstance, that this sense *has been dictated to me out of heaven* (*quod ille e cælo mihi dictatus fuerit*)" (A. C. 6597).

On this account, also, Swedenborg wrote in a *Sketch of the History of the New Church* (photo-lithographic edition of his MSS., vol. viii. p. 1), as follows:—

(10.) "Those books are to be enumerated which were written *by the Lord through me (a Domino per me)* from the beginning to the present day."

That by the descent of the holy city New Jerusalem is meant the publication of the doctrines of the New Church, and the establishment of a New Church by means of these doctrines, is taught clearly in *Coronis*, Nos. 18 and 20, where it is written :—

(11.) "We read that John saw the holy city New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. xxi. 1). By the holy city New Jerusalem is understood *the doctrine of the New Church*, and thus the Church as to doctrine; and by Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven is understood that the true doctrine of the Church is from no other source. *The doctrine comes down*, because the Church is a Church from doctrine, and according to it: without doctrine a Church is no more a Church than a man is a man without members and interior and exterior organs, and thus from the mere cutaneous covering which simulates his external form; and as little as a house is a house without chambers, rooms, furniture, and utensils, and thus from its mere naked walls. Exactly so it is with the Church.

"Before the Last Judgment no doctrine of the Church could be brought down by the Lord through heaven to the men upon earth. But since the Last Judgment man is brought with a more free and spontaneous spirit to cast off falsities and receive truths. With those who accommodate themselves and suffer themselves to be led by the Lord the doctrine of the new heaven is afterwards derived and introduced, which is the doctrine of truth and good falling from heaven like the dew of twilight, by which the leaves of the grass are opened, and their vegetative juice is sweetened. This doctrine, also, is like the shower of rain, which refreshes the firstfruits of the field and causes them to sprout; it is also like the fragrance exhaling from the fields, gardens, and flowery meadows, which is inhaled by the breast with an eager and glad spirit."

From this passage it is also clearly proved that the New Jerusalem does not descend insensibly into the interiors of men, and hence does not transform them

gradually by an interior process into members of the New Jerusalem; for it is distinctly stated here that by the descent of the New Jerusalem is meant *the descent of doctrine*, and that by means of this doctrine the New Jerusalem is established upon earth.

That the doctrines of the New Church contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg come to us with the authority of the Lord and not with the authority of Swedenborg, and that the Lord has made in these writings His Second Coming, is taught in the 19th chapter of the Revelation in these words: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, . . . and His name is called the Word of God." These words are explained in *A. R.* 820 thus:—

(12.) "By these words is signified that the spiritual sense of the Word has been revealed by the Lord, and that thereby an interior understanding of the Word has been discovered, WHICH IS THE LORD'S ADVENT. . . . That the spiritual sense of the Word has been revealed this day may be seen in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, where the two books of Moses, Genesis and Exodus, have been explained according to that sense; also in *The Doctrine of the New Jerusalem concerning the Sacred Scripture*, Nos. 5-26; in the little work on *The White Horse*, from beginning to end, and in the passages collected there from the Sacred Scripture; and moreover, in the present explanations of the Apocalypse, where not a single verse can be understood without the spiritual sense."

As a further proof that the Lord effected His Second Coming by Swedenborg's theological writings, Swedenborg makes the following statement in his *Sketch of a History of the New Church*, to which we have already referred:—

(13.) "Upon all my books, in the spiritual world, was written *The Lord's Advent (Adventus Domini)*. The same I also inscribed, by command, on two copies in Holland."

From all of this it follows that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg come to us with Divine authority, and that these doctrines are the spiritual sense of the Word in and by which the Lord effected His Second Coming.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH IN THEIR RELATION TO THE WORD.

THE *second* objection which is made to our position that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are the final law in the Lord's New Church, is as follows: By making the doctrines of the internal sense, or the doctrines taught in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, the law in the New Church, you thereby supersede the inspired letter of the Word of God, and make it of no account, for there can be only one authority, not two authorities, in the Church.

By acknowledging the doctrines of the internal sense to be the law of the New Church we acknowledge *the Lord* AT HIS SECOND COMING to be the authority in the New Church. But as the Second Coming of the Lord does not abrogate His First Coming, so also by acknowledging the authority of the doctrines of the internal sense we do not abrogate the authority of the letter of the Word. The letter is the body, the internal sense the soul (see *A. C.* 4857, 8943; *H. H.* 307); and the letter of the Word and its internal sense are as much one as the body and the soul are one. Besides, by declaring the soul

of the Word to be authoritative we do not impugn the authority of the body of the Word; for the soul dwells in the body, and rests upon it, and all the power of the soul is wielded by the body. If you take the body away from the soul in this world, all its power is gone. In declaring the doctrines of the internal sense to be authoritative in the Church, we are therefore most careful not to separate these doctrines from the letter of the Word. We acknowledge and revere the letter of the word as the vessel and continent of the spiritual sense; but as all the value of a vessel is derived from its contents, so also all the value of the letter of the Word is derived from the spiritual sense. On this subject we read, in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, No. 3:—

(14.) “Without such a life [*i.e.* without the spiritual and celestial sense, contained interiorly in the Word] the Word as to its letter is dead; for the Word is like man, who, as is known in the Christian world, is external and internal. The external man separate from the internal is the body, and thus dead; but it is the internal which lives, and which gives the external the faculty of living. The internal man is man’s soul. So also the Word, as to the letter only, is like a body without a soul.” (See also *A. C.* 755; *S. S.* 77.)

In declaring the spiritual sense to be authoritative in the New Church, we therefore claim authority for the living and not for the dead principle in the Word of God; and we also claim authority for the letter of the Word, yet only when the letter is instinct with spirit, and thus only in proportion as the letter is regarded as the continent and bearer of the spiritual sense. We read further:—

(15.) “To the end that the Lord might be constantly present, He discovered to me the spiritual sense of His Word, in which Divine

Truth is in its light ; and in this He is continually present : for the Lord is present in the Word only by the spiritual sense, and from the light of the spiritual sense He passes into the shade, in which is the sense of the letter" (*T. C. R.* 780).

By acknowledging the doctrines of the internal sense to be authoritative in the New Church we therefore acknowledge the Lord encompassed with light as the authority in the New Church ; while those who acknowledge the letter of the Word as authoritative acknowledge the Lord surrounded with shade as their authority ; and in proportion as they not only acknowledge the authority of the letter, but deny at the same time the authority of the doctrines of the internal sense, they are indeed in the acknowledgment of the Lord's First Coming, but deny His Second Coming.

In holding, therefore, the internal sense of the Word to be authoritative in the New Church, we do not deny the authority of the letter ; but we do deny and repudiate the idea that the merely literal sense, as interpreted by fallible men, is to be set in the New Church as an authority over the doctrines of the internal sense. The internal is always the master, and the external the servant, and not *vice versa*. Such is the case with the internal and external in the Church, and also in man, and such must be the case with the internal and external in the Word, for Divine order is the same everywhere. We read in this respect :—

(16.) "The externals of the Church without internals are of no value, but they derive their value from internals, and are of such a quality as are the internals. The case is as with man : his external or corporeal

nature in itself is a mere nothing unless there is an internal to animate and vivify it; wherefore the quality of the external is determined by that of the internal. Or in other words: according to the quality of the soul and mind is the value of all things which exist by the external or corporeal nature. The things of the heart, and not those of the mouth and of outward gesture, constitute the man. Such also is the case with the internals of the Church; yet the externals of the Church are like the externals of man in this respect, that they serve and minister (*procurent et administrent*)" (A. C. 1795).

In the same way, also, the letter, or the literal sense, serves and ministers to the spiritual sense, and not *vice versa*. The service and ministry which the literal sense affords to the spiritual sense is this, that it is the vessel out of which the doctrine of the internal sense is drawn; and after it is drawn out of it this same doctrine is confirmed by the literal sense, wherefore the literal sense is the basis of the spiritual sense. This is clearly taught in S. S. 54, where we read:—

(17.) "Doctrine must not only be drawn from the sense of the letter of the Word, but also be *confirmed* by it; for unless the truth of doctrine is confirmed by the letter of the Word, it appears as if only the intelligence of man, and not the Lord's Divine Wisdom, is contained in it. Doctrine also, in this case, would be like a house in the air, and not upon the earth, and thus it would be without a basis."

By maintaining that the doctrine of the internal sense is the soul, and that the letter is in the place of a body to this doctrine, or that the internal sense is the ruler and the literal sense the servant and minister, we also answer the objection of those who maintain that by claiming Divine authority for the teachings contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, we set up the pretension that these writings are a "*third*" Word, when yet the Lord has

expressly declared that "no addition will ever be made to the Word."

It is true that the Lord has said, "If any man shall *add* unto the prophecy of this book, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Yet in the same book we read that "this book would be opened, and the seals thereof would be loosed." And we read further, that upon the opening of the first seal John saw "a white horse," by which is meant "the interior understanding, and thus the spiritual sense of the Word" (*A. R.* 320). We see, therefore, that the spiritual sense of the Word from the very first formed an integral part of the Word, only it was "sealed." By revealing, therefore, what was originally contained in the Word, no addition is made to it. But if anything which from the very first had been in the Word, and had formed a part of the Word, is taken away from it; if therefore the Divinity of the doctrines of the internal sense which are contained interiorly in the letter, and which have been revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming, is denied, then the additional words of the Lord in the Revelation come into force: "And if any man shall *take away* from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." That this is the spiritual meaning of this passage is plainly stated in *A. R.* 959, where we read as follows:—

(18.) "That it may be known that by these words is not meant he who takes away from the words of this book as it is written in the sense of the letter, but he who takes away *from the truths of doctrine which*

are in its spiritual sense, I will explain the reason : The Word which was dictated from the Lord passed through the heavens of His celestial and through the heavens of His spiritual kingdom, and thus came to man, by whom it was written ; wherefore the Word in its first origin is purely Divine. This, by passing through the heavens of the Lord's celestial kingdom, became the Divine celestial, and by passing through the heavens of the Lord's spiritual kingdom it became the Divine spiritual, and when it came to man it became the Divine natural ; and hence it is that the natural sense of the Word contains within it the spiritual sense, and this the celestial sense, and both a purely Divine sense, which does not appear to any man, nor to any angel. These things have been adduced in order that it may be seen that by not *adding to or taking away* anything from the writings in the Apocalypse is understood in heaven that nothing is to be added to, or to be taken away from the truths of doctrine concerning the Lord, concerning faith in Him, and concerning a life according to His precepts : for this is the sense from which, as has been said, is the sense of the letter."

By "not adding to or taking from the prophecy of this book" is therefore meant that the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word, which have been revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming, are to be the law and the authority and the standard of truth in the New Jerusalem, and that nothing must either be added to or taken from this authority.

Those are filled with a desire of *adding* to the doctrines of the internal sense who say that these doctrines are not complete, which is equivalent to a declaration that the Lord's Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg is not complete ; and the ground on which they make this assertion is, that the Lord through Swedenborg did not reveal the whole of the internal sense of Scripture, but only a part. Those would fain convince their fellow-members in the Church that the Lord will supplement His Second Coming by filling other men with His

Spirit, in order by them to supply the deficiencies of the doctrines of the internal sense in their present form. In order to claim for the doctrines of such men the authority of the Lord's Second Coming, they further hold that the Lord has not once for all effected His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Emanuel Swedenborg, but that His Second Coming is progressive, and that it takes place in proportion as the leading doctrines of the New Church are adopted by mankind in general, and in proportion as the deficiencies of the internal sense are supplied by the instrumentality of other enlightened men.

In answer to these men, we may state that the doctrines of the internal sense are an integral whole, and that they are "drawn out of the literal sense, and afterwards confirmed by it." That the doctrine contained in Swedenborg's theological works was drawn from the whole of the letter of the Word, and not simply from Genesis, Exodus, and the Revelation, can be seen from the passages of the letter of the Word by which these doctrines are confirmed, and which have been derived from every part of the letter of the Word, as may be proved by a mere inspection of the valuable work compiled by the late J. F. E. le Boys des Guays, entitled *General Index of Passages from the Divine Word quoted in the Works of Emanuel Swedenborg*. If it be objected that this Index shows that *all* the passages of the Sacred Scripture have not been explained according to their spiritual meaning, it may be answered that from the fact that Swedenborg has not specified every passage of the letter of the Sacred Scripture from which the doctrines

of the internal sense are drawn, it does not follow that the doctrine has not been drawn from the whole of the letter of the Word, for there are innumerable statements of doctrine made in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, *Heaven and Hell*, *The Divine Love and Wisdom*, *The Divine Providence*, *The True Christian Religion*, and in all the other doctrinal writings of Swedenborg, where the particular passages of the letter of the Word from which these doctrines have been drawn are not specified ; and yet as all these doctrinal statements belong to the doctrines of the New Church, which are identical with the internal sense of the Word, they must be based upon and drawn from some passage of Scripture. The objection, therefore, that the revelation made by Emanuel Swedenborg is not complete amounts simply to this, that all the passages of the literal sense have not been used in confirmation of the doctrines of the internal sense, while no proofs whatever have been adduced to show that the doctrines themselves are not complete. On the contrary, as the letter of the Word which the Lord fulfilled at His First Coming is a whole, we have every reason to believe that the doctrine of the internal sense, by the revelation of which He effected His Second Coming, is also a whole, and that as there is not a single iota wanting in the letter of the Word, there is also not a single iota wanting in those doctrines which constitute the internal sense of the Word. Where there is nothing wanting there is no cause for an *addition*.

On the other hand, however, the members of the Lord's Church must carefully refrain from *taking away* from these doctrines by denying the authority of any

portion of these doctrines as contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg ; but this they do by declaring that by the light of their reason they perceive some parts therein which are not Divine, and which have been inserted by Swedenborg himself, and not by the Lord. The various attempts to limit or take away from the authority of the doctrines contained in the theological works of Swedenborg will be minutely examined in subsequent parts of our dissertation ; we shall therefore add here some corroborating statements, showing that the doctrines of the Church are the internal sense of the Word.

It is known and generally believed in the Church, that the letter of the Word can only be understood by means of doctrine, which is, to the man of the Church, in the place of a lamp (see *A. C.* 10,324, 10,584 ; *H. D.* 254). This doctrine, however, which is to serve as a lamp for the understanding of the Word, is identical with the internal sense, as is plainly stated in the following passage from the *Arcana Cœlestia*, No. 10,400 :—

(19.) “The doctrine which ought to serve man as a lamp is that which is taught by the internal sense, and thus *it is the internal sense.*”

Further passages are :—

(20.) “The doctrine of faith is the same as the understanding of the Word as to its interiors, and it is the same as the internal sense” (*A. C.* 2762).

(21.) “The true doctrine of the Church is what is here called the internal sense ; for in the internal sense are truths such as are with the angels in heaven” (*A. C.* 9025).

(22.) “Those who remain merely in the literal sense of the Word, and do not collect anything of doctrine thence, are separate from the internal sense ; for *the internal sense is doctrine itself.* The conjunction

of the Lord with the externals of the Word is by the internals" (*A. C.* 9380).

(23.) "The doctrine of charity and faith is the internal of the Word, and the sense of the letter its external. . . . From that doctrine the internal of the Word is known; for the internal of the Word is the very doctrine of love to the Lord and charity to the neighbour according to Matt. xxi. 34, 38" (*A. C.* 9409).

(24.) "The true doctrine of the Word is the internal of the Word" (*A. C.* 9410).

(25.) "By the genuine doctrine of the Church as to faith and life the internal sense of the Word is inscribed upon man's understanding, as well as upon his will; upon his understanding by faith, and upon his will by life" (*A. C.* 9430).

(26.) "Those see the hinder-parts of Jehovah, and not His face, who believe the Word and adore it, but simply its external, which is the sense of the letter, and who do not enter more interiorly like those who are illustrated, and who prepare for themselves a doctrine from the Word by which they may see its genuine, and thus its interior, sense. The Word cannot be understood without doctrine; doctrine prepared from the Word by one in illustration must serve the understanding as a lamp, and the internal sense of the Word teaches this doctrine" (*A. C.* 10,584).

In the *New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine*, No. 7, we meet with this passage:—

(27.) "In respect to the special doctrine which now follows, this also is from heaven, because it is from the spiritual sense of the Word, and the spiritual sense of the Word is identical with the doctrine in heaven. . . . But let me approach the doctrine itself, which is for the New Church, and which is called Heavenly Doctrine because it was revealed to me out of heaven; to deliver this doctrine is the object of this work."

We see, therefore, that the genuine doctrines of the Church, and hence the doctrines taught by Emanuel Swedenborg, "whom the Lord filled with His Spirit for the purpose of teaching the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from Himself" (*T. C. R.* 779), *are the internal sense of the Word*, and that they

come to us with all the authority of the internal sense of the Word, which is the essential Word of God (*A. C.* 1540, 3432), yea, which is the Lord Himself, according to these words, "The internal sense is the soul of the Word, and is the very Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord ; thus it is the Lord Himself" (*A. C.* 9349). When, therefore, Swedenborg declares in *A. C.* 6597, that "*the internal sense has been dictated to him out of heaven,*" this means nothing more and nothing less than that the whole of the doctrines of the New Church, and everything belonging thereto, and thus the contents of all those works which he published as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, were dictated to him out of heaven. He therefore declares most emphatically that he wrote these works by inspiration, that they are the Lord's works and not his own, and that therefore they come to the members of the Church with a Divine and not a merely human authority. Yet these doctrines do not supersede the letter of the Word, nor do they diminish its importance ; for, as we read again :—

(28.) "The literal sense is by no means annihilated by the internal sense, but is rather confirmed and strengthened thereby ; for every single word of the letter obtains weight and holiness from the internal sense which is within. Besides, the literal sense is the basis and fulcrum by which the internal sense exerts its power, and with which it is so intimately conjoined, that there is not an iota, point, or tittle in the letter of the Word which does not contain within it what is Divine" (*A. C.* 9349).

Some may think that the doctrines of the New Church cannot be the internal sense of the Word, because they were published by Swedenborg in so many detached volumes, and thus form a distinct

whole, separate from the letter of the Word of God. Yet it is not the paper, ink, and binding which constitute the doctrines of the New Church, as little as these materials constitute the Bible or the Word of God. They are accidents of space and time added to, but not belonging to the Word. On account of the presence of these accidents, both those writings which contain the internal sense of the Word of God, and that book which contains its literal sense, are dead, and they are not vivified until they are received in the mind of man (*A. C.* 1776). But in the minds of men these doctrines become the internal sense of the Word of God, because they become the interior understanding which is connected in their minds with the literal sense of Scripture; and in proportion as these doctrines in the minds of the members of the New Church become based upon the literal sense of Scripture, the Lord Himself is present with them, and illustrates their understanding of the internal sense. For conjunction with heaven, and hence the Lord's presence, is caused by the letter of the Word, which is written by correspondences; but it is not caused by the spiritual sense, or by the doctrines of the spiritual sense independently of the letter, since these doctrines are written in the common language of men, and indeed in the language of Swedenborg, which the Lord employed as a vessel in conveying these doctrines to mankind. Let us, therefore, continue to revere the letter of the Word of God as the medium of conjunction between heaven and earth, and as the only means by which the Lord can illustrate man in the true understanding of the internal sense of Scripture.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH IN THEIR RELATION TO HUMAN REASON.

THE *third* objection usually advanced against our position that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are to be the law in the Lord's New Church, comes from those who say : We do admit the authority of the *doctrines* of the New Church, but we hold that the doctrines of the New Church are mixed up in the writings of Swedenborg with his own ideas and his own notions ; wherefore we hold that the members of the New Church must make use of their reason so as to separate what is human from what is Divine, and what is fallible from what is infallible in these writings.

Those who hold these views believe in a mixed authority, or rather they hold that there are two authorities in the Church. One of these authorities is that which they call the *doctrines* of the New Church, which are, according to their ideas, contained in the writings of Swedenborg in the same way as gold mixed with dross is contained in the earth. The second authority is their own *reason*, by which they separate the dross from the gold, or by which they declare which portions in the writings of

Swedenborg belong to the doctrines of the Church, and hence are authoritative, and which portions are Swedenborg's own human additions, and hence are void of authority in the Church. They therefore set up their own reason as umpire in the Church, and declare that their reason has to decide what is authoritative in the Church and what is not. But is it not very plain that all those who hold these opinions set up their own authority in the Church, and deny that of the teachings which are contained in Swedenborg's writings, and hence that they deny the authority of the Lord at His Second Coming? For an authority which is questioned, or which is submitted to another authority, is no authority. It is authority under another authority, and the other authority acts through it, and thereby denies it any authority independent of itself. It is plain, also, that any one who makes the authority of the doctrines contingent upon the assent or dissent of his reason, subjects these doctrines to himself, and declares "himself to be the law" of the Church, and also teaches that "the law of the Church is from himself." Nor is this matter mended if the person in question repudiates this authority when he is alone by himself, but claims this authority when he sits in conference or in convention with others; for in that case he shifts the authority from one man to many men, and thus still opposes the authority of man to the authority of God.

But it may be retorted that he who submits the teachings of the writings of the Church to the arbitrament of his reason, does not submit them thereby to the authority of what is his own or of his *proprium*;

because the faculty of reason comes from the Lord, and because when he with the use of his reason decides as to the fallibility or infallibility of any portion of the theological writings of Swedenborg, he does so in a state of illustration or perception from the Lord. But who is to decide whether a person is in a state of illustration or perception when he declares as to the truth or falsity of any portion of the writings of the New Church? In the first place, this gift of perception or illustration from the Lord, by which man sees the truth not from himself but from the Lord, presupposes a state in which man has reached not only the sixth, but even the seventh stage of the regenerate life, and of this Swedenborg says that "scarcely any one ever reaches that state" (*A. C.* 18). Is any one rash enough to maintain, in the face of this declaration, that he is one of those exceptional ones that have reached this seventh state? The conclusion, therefore, is that such a person does not enjoy the perception of the celestial man, yea, scarcely the illustration of the spiritual man, concerning which we read that it is "a certain favouring and consent from the interior that a thing is true, and a disfavouring if it is not true" (*A. C.* 8694). Besides, such "a favouring or disfavouring," of which Swedenborg in the same place says that "it is not manifest, nor altogether hidden," is evidently not sufficient to enable a man of the Church, whether layman or minister, to decide whether a statement in the writings is a matter of doctrine or not. On the contrary, there is a strong presumption that his regeneration, either as a spiritual or a celestial man, is not yet accomplished, and that

his reason is of that description concerning which we read in *The Divine Providence*, No. 98 :—

(29.) “Every man has the faculty of willing, which is called freedom, and the faculty of understanding, which is called reason. . . . But it is quite a different thing to act from freedom according to reason, and to act from freedom *itself* according to reason *itself*. From freedom itself according to reason itself those only act who have suffered themselves to be regenerated by the Lord; all the rest act from freedom according to thought, which with them has the appearance of reason (*quam instar rationis faciunt*).”

It is plain, therefore, that if the reason of the men of the Church is to decide as to the fallibility or infallibility of any portion of the writings, all authority in the Church, and hence all acknowledgment of the truth in the Church, is at an end. For if reason with all men whose regeneration is not accomplished, or who are not in the process of regeneration, is but another term for their own thought; and if, as is generally admitted, the thought of every man differs from that of every other man, there would be in that case as many sources of authority in the Church as there are men, which is equivalent to no authority.

In demanding the authority of the Word, and hence of the Lord, for the teachings contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and in denying the authority of men's reason over the doctrines revealed by his instrumentality, we are, however, very far from exacting a blind belief in his writings, and from holding that a man ought not to exercise his own thought in matters of doctrine. It is one thing to claim infallibility for human reason by setting it above revealed truth, and quite a different thing for reason to accept revealed truth as an authority, and

by the aid of this authority to distinguish between what is true and false. In the first case, human reason acknowledges no law superior to itself, but is a law to itself, and declares that all law emanates from itself; but in the latter case, human reason does acknowledge a law superior to itself, and by means of this law decides between what is just and unjust, between what is true and false.

The question whether reason is to be consulted in matters of faith is treated at great length in the *Arcana Cœlestia*; nay, we read concerning the Lord that, when He was young, and saw that man can receive only that of which he is able to form to himself a rational idea, He began to think whether reason ought not to be placed above doctrine; but He saw that this could not be, because thus doctrine would be destroyed (see *A. C.* 2519, 2588).

The doctrine of the New Church on this subject is as follows:—

(30.) “It is quite a different thing to look upon the doctrine of faith from reason, and to look upon the things of reason from the doctrine of faith. To look upon the doctrine of faith from the things of reason is equivalent to a belief in the Word and in doctrine thence, until one is persuaded from rational considerations that they are true; but to look upon the things of reason from the doctrine of faith is equivalent to first believing the Word or doctrine thence, and then confirming them by rational considerations. The former is order inverted, and the result is that nothing is believed; but the latter is genuine order, and causes the doctrine of faith to be believed better.

“There are therefore two principles, of which one leads to all stupidity and madness, and the other to all intelligence and wisdom. The first principle consists in denying everything, or in saying at heart that one cannot believe these things before being convinced by such things as may be comprehended or felt. This principle leads to all stupidity and insanity, and may be called the *negative* principle. The

other principle consists in affirming those things which belong to doctrine from the Word, or in thinking or believing that they are true because the Lord has spoken them. This principle leads to all intelligence and wisdom, and is to be called the *affirmative* principle. Those who think from a negative principle, the more they consult the things of reason, and the more they consult scientific and philosophical things, the more they cast and precipitate themselves into darkness, until they finally deny everything ; and the reason of this is, because no one from lower things can comprehend higher, that is, spiritual and celestial, and still less Divine things, for they transcend all understanding ; and moreover, each single thing from its source is then mixed with negative things. But on the other hand, those who think from an affirmative principle may confirm themselves by everything rational and everything scientific—yea, by everything philosophical ; for all these are to them confirmations, and give to them a fuller idea” (*A. C.* 2568).

What Swedenborg here calls an affirmative principle means in reality to accept the truth revealed from the Lord as an authority ; and what he calls a negative principle means to deny the authority of revealed truth either *in toto*, or to accept only so much of it as human reason approves as the doctrine of the Church.

The attitude, therefore, which is occupied by those who declare that in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg the doctrines of the New Church are mixed with Swedenborg’s own ideas, and that human reason is to decide how much or how little of his teachings constitutes the doctrine of the New Church, resembles, to say the least, the attitude of those who, Swedenborg says, are ruled by a negative principle. While those who are willing to accept the theological writings which Swedenborg wrote as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ as the law of the New Church, and who, in all questions of internal and external worship, are willing to be directed by the

doctrines contained in these writings, are animated by an affirmative principle.

From this teaching of Swedenborg it follows further, that the New Church, by accepting the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg as its law and final authority, will be led to all intelligence and wisdom; while by listening to those who advance doubts as to their authority, and who would submit the teachings of the internal sense of the Word of God to their own reason, the New Church will be led into all stupidity and insanity.

Among those who hold that the writings of the New Church are a mixed product of the Lord and Swedenborg, a great variety of sentiments prevails as to how much in these writings is from the Lord and how much from Swedenborg; yet, as they are all pretty much agreed that his account of things seen and heard in the other world, which includes the account of his visions in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, his work on *Heaven and Hell*, and his *Memorable Relations*, are his own and not the Lord's, we shall adduce Swedenborg's own testimony to the effect that his mission consisted in revealing to mankind not only the internal sense of Scripture, but also the *arcana* of heaven:—

(31.) “By the 29th to the 31st verses in Matt. xxiv. is understood that at the end of the Church, when there is no longer any love and faith thence, the Lord would open the Word as to its internal sense, and reveal the *arcana* or hidden things of heaven. The *arcana* of heaven, which will be revealed in what follows, treat of heaven and hell, and, at the same time, of man's life after death” (*H. H.* 1).

From this passage we see that it was the Lord and not Swedenborg who revealed to mankind the *arcana*

of heaven in the work on *Heaven and Hell*. In confirmation of this, Swedenborg declares distinctly in the latter part of his *Spiritual Diary* (Part III. vol. ii. p. 205) that the work on *Heaven and Hell* was not his but the Lord's work, "who was desirous to reveal the nature of heaven and hell, and man's life after death, and the things respecting the Last Judgment." Whence it appears, that when Swedenborg himself speaks of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem which he was to reveal from the Lord, he always includes among them the record of what he himself saw and heard in heaven, so that the distinction made between the *Arcana Cœlestia* or *The Apocalypse Revealed* on the one hand, and *Heaven and Hell* on the other, originated altogether with the readers of Swedenborg, and not with Swedenborg himself.

With regard to the *Memorable Relations*, however, to which so much exception is taken by some of those who study the writings of the New Church, although others regard them as the most beautiful and sublime parts of his writings, they are declared by Swedenborg himself to be essential portions of his writings, as appears from his answer to Count Höpken, who says in a letter to a friend :¹—

(32.) "I asked Swedenborg once why he wrote and published these *Memorable Relations*, which seemed to throw so much ridicule on his doctrine, otherwise so rational, and whether it would not be best for him to keep them to himself, and not to publish them to the world? But he answered that *he had orders from the Lord to publish them*, and that those who might ridicule him on that account would do him in-

¹ See *Documents concerning Swedenborg*, edited by the Rev. R. L. Tafel, vol. ii. p. 416.

justice ; for, said he, why should I, who am a man in years, render myself ridiculous for fantasies and falsehoods ? ”

And why, we may add, should we, who believe the testimony of Swedenborg, be afraid or ashamed to acknowledge our faith in these *Memorable Relations*, concerning which Swedenborg himself declares that “ he had orders from the Lord to publish them ” ? The presence of these *Memorable Relations* in his works no doubt acts as a great safeguard against a merely partial reception of the doctrines of the New Church, and for persons who are ashamed or afraid to incur the odium of the world by acknowledging their faith in Swedenborg’s *Memorable Relations*, it is perhaps useful not to enter more deeply into an acknowledgment of the truth of the doctrine promulgated by him than they can be kept in for all future time.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH IN THEIR RELATION TO NATURAL SCIENCE.

THE *fourth* objection made against our position that the doctrines contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are the law in the Lord's New Church, is advanced by those who say : We are willing to accept as authoritative what Swedenborg reveals to us on spiritual subjects, either in the form of doctrine drawn from the Word, or from things seen and heard in the spiritual world ; but we cannot attribute the same kind of authority to what he declares in respect to the things of this world.

This position seems rational and orthodox, and also safe, and we believe that it is occupied in good faith by men who would shrink from passing judgment on the fallibility or infallibility of any portion of Swedenborg's theological writings treating on internal and external worship, and thus concerning, in their estimation, the law of the Church. By thus leaving open the ground which Swedenborg has in common with natural science, these men think that they save the Church the trouble and inconvenience, and also the dis-

advantage, resulting from a possible disagreement of Swedenborg's science with the science of the day.

From the benevolent opposition thus made by some New Churchmen to the natural science taught in the writings of the New Church, it would seem as if there were among these writings some works specially devoted to the study of the natural sciences which could easily be singled out from the other works. But such is by no means the case. The facts and theories of natural science contained therein are all for the purpose of proving and confirming spiritual truths; they are therefore in the place of a natural basis to these truths. Besides, the explanations of natural subjects occurring there are frequently so interwoven and logically connected with explanations of spiritual subjects, and the spiritual principles which are enunciated there enter generally so deeply and thoroughly into the natural subjects, that it is sometimes quite impossible to separate the two; and if you do succeed in effecting a separation, the spiritual truth perishes, because it is deprived of the natural basis on which it rests.

That there is such a connection between spiritual and natural things, and that natural things are altogether indispensable for the presentation of spiritual things in this world, appears plainly from the following passage from the *Arcana Cœlestia*, No. 5373:—

(33.) “Scientifics belonging to the natural [plane] are the ultimates of order; prior things must be in ultimate or last things, that they may exist and appear in that sphere. And besides, all prior things tend towards ultimate things as to their boundaries or limits; and there they exist together, as causes in their effects, or as higher things exist in lower things as in their vessels. The scientifics of the natural [plane or mind]

are such ultimates, and hence the spiritual world terminates in man's natural [mind], where those things are. The things of the spiritual world *are presented representatively*; and unless spiritual things were thus representatively presented in the natural [plane], and hence by means of such things as are in the world, they could by no means be comprehended."

And again we read:—

(34.) "The spiritual sense cannot be perceived by man except in proportion as it may be presented and expounded by such things as belong to the world and nature" (*A. C.* 6996).

We see, therefore, that the spiritual truths which the Lord revealed to mankind at His Second Coming in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg are there "presented representatively" by the things of the natural world, or by the natural truths which are contained in those writings. And if these natural things are removed thence, the spiritual things at once become incomprehensible; for "unless spiritual things are presented representatively by means of such things as are in the world," we read, "they cannot by any possibility be comprehended."

We see, therefore, that the spiritual things in the theological writings of Swedenborg are as the soul, while the natural things, or the natural truths contained there, are in the place of the body, and that their relation is as intimate as that existing between the soul and the body. Yea, we see further that as the soul exercises all its power in this world by the body, and upon the removal of the body becomes altogether powerless, so also the spiritual truths in the writings of the New Church derive their power altogether from the natural things by which they are "representatively presented," or in which they

are presented as in an image. This is the cause of the many illustrations used by Swedenborg in his theological writings, and this also is the cause why so many memorable relations of the other world are contained there. These illustrations and these memorable relations were required, in order that spiritual truths might be mirrored in them, and thereby brought within the sphere of comprehension of men in this world.

But it may be retorted that these natural truths or these natural facts are plainly Swedenborg's, and not the Lord's, because they existed in Swedenborg's mind, and he had acquired the greater part of them before the Lord called him to his office.

These facts, it is true, existed in Swedenborg's mind before he was called by the Lord to his office, even as the man Swedenborg was in existence before the Lord called him to his work ; but as the Lord adopted the man Swedenborg in order that by him, or through his instrumentality, He might effect His Second Coming, so also the Lord adopted and made use of the natural scientifics which were in his mind. Yea, as we learn that Swedenborg was prepared by the Lord "from his earliest youth" (*T. C. R.* 850), so that "he could receive the doctrines of the New Jerusalem with his understanding" (*T. C. R.* 779), so also his understanding was furnished "from his earliest youth" with such natural facts and truths as could "present representatively" the spiritual doctrines which he would receive from the Lord, and as would enable mankind to understand these spiritual doctrines. Yet after the Lord had adopted these natural facts, and made them

the ultimate vessels in which the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word were brought down to men out of heaven, these facts were no more Swedenborg's, but they became the Lord's; wherefore they put off the fallible quality of Swedenborg, and put on the infallible quality of God.

All the natural facts, therefore, contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg have acquired the force and power of natural truths; and by means of these natural truths the whole field of natural science may be reformed and regenerated, even as the whole field of philosophy and theology will be reformed and regenerated by the rational and spiritual truths which are contained in the same writings.

This also the Lord declared through the mouth of John, when, after the descent of the holy city New Jerusalem, by which is typically represented the descent of the doctrines of the New Church, he said, "Behold, I make all things new."

The same thing He likewise declared by the Prophet Isaiah, when he said, "In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt into Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land."

As all power is in ultimates, so also the strength and power of the spiritual truths in the writings of the New Church are contained in the natural things which are used in "presenting representatively" these spiritual truths to mankind, and by which they are enabled to comprehend these truths. As many of these natural

things, however, are taken from the plane of the external senses, and thus may be compassed, criticised, and judged by sensual thought, those who impugn the Divine authority of the writings of the New Church, and who deny that the Lord in and by these writings has effected His Second Coming, from the very first directed their attention to these natural things, and they have been busy ever since in trying to discover contradictions between Swedenborg's science and the natural science of the day; and whenever they have been fortunate enough to discover what appears to them a discrepancy, they have forged it into an argument against the authority of the theological writings of Swedenborg. Like crafty assailants, they do not direct their attacks at once against the citadel of the New Jerusalem, against the spiritual truths or the doctrines of the internal sense taught in the writings of Swedenborg, because in that case their shafts would recoil at once from the spiritual armour of those who have a sincere and firm belief in the Second Coming of the Lord. They therefore do not assail the soul or the substance of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, but they assail the body or the form in which these doctrines have been communicated to mankind, well knowing that if the body is destroyed, the power or the authority of the soul is destroyed.

Like the serpent in the garden of Eden, they have assailed the New Church, *i.e.* the New Church in the minds of those who believe in the Lord's Second Coming, in the *heel*, in its sensual part; which is formed by the sensual truths of the new dispensation. And as these truths form an integral whole with the spiritual

truths which are "representatively presented" in them, the poison has gradually spread from the heel to the higher and more interior portions of the system, so that a belief in the Divinity and infallibility of the teachings contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg, and hence a belief that the Lord in and by these writings has effected His Second Coming, is treated by many who ought to know better as a dangerous doctrine that ought to be classed in the same category with the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope.

But what ought a conscientious member of the New Church to do when attempts are made, not only to show discrepancies between Swedenborg's science and the science of the day, but also to prove contradictions in the doctrinal parts of the writings? When a conscientious member of the New Church hears any charges made against the Divinity and infallibility of either the soul or the body of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, he must at once place himself on the unequivocal declaration made in these doctrines, that the Lord has effected His Second Coming in and by means of those writings which were published by Emanuel Swedenborg as His servant, that therefore these charges are not, and cannot be, true; and to prove to him that this is the correct course to follow, let him read the following passage from the *Arcana Cœlestia*, No. 6749 :—

(35.) "Some spirits, not of those who are altogether righteous, were with me for some time, and continually injected doubts from the fallacies of the senses against this truth, that all things are able to flow in from one source, and thus from the Lord. They were, however, told that so

many doubts could not be removed at once on account of the many fallacies of the senses that require to be removed first, and on account of the innumerable things that are not known, and which must be known first; yea, that with those who are in a negative state, *i.e.* with whom a negative principle reigns universally, doubts can never be removed, because with them one scruple weighs more than a thousand confirmatory proofs. For one scruple is like a speck of sand placed before the pupil of the eye, which, although it is only one, and so very small, yet obstructs the sight of the whole eye. Those, however, who are in an affirmative state, *i.e.* with whom an affirmative principle reigns universally, reject scruples from fallacies which are opposed to truths; and if there are any things which they do not understand, they reject them to the sides, and say that they do not yet understand them, and thus they remain in the faith of the truth. But these spirits did not pay much attention to this, because they were in a negative state."

So, also, if there are any charges brought against the teachings contained in the theological works of Swedenborg, by which it is attempted to prove that the Lord has not made His Second Coming in and by means of them, and hence that they are not of Divine, but of human authority; and if a member of the Church who believes in the Divine authority of these writings cannot at once demonstrate the futility of these charges, he will say that "he cannot yet understand" or see the groundlessness of this charge, but that he nevertheless casts it aside, and holds on to the Divine authority of the doctrines of the Church, being confident that sooner or later, when "the many fallacies that require to be removed first" are removed, and when "the innumerable things that require to be known first" are known, the groundlessness of all these charges will be made apparent.

To this we may add, however, that the charges of inconsistency and of contradiction that have hitherto

{ been brought against the writings of the New Church have all been of such a nature that their unreasonableness and groundlessness can be proved by the advocates of the Divine nature of these revelations, even by means of the knowledge they have hitherto derived from these writings.

CHAPTER VI.

NATURE OF SWEDENBORG'S INSPIRATION.

THE *fifth* objection to the Divine authority of the writings of the New Church is made by those who are willing to attribute to Swedenborg a high state of *illustration*, but who do not recognise his claim to *inspiration*. They say, We admit that Swedenborg in writing his theological works enjoyed a high degree of illumination or illustration; yea, we are willing to admit that the degree of his illustration surpassed that of any other man whose works on theological and philosophical subjects have been preserved to us, yet we hold that his illustration differed from that which is enjoyed by any other good man only in degree and not in kind. They therefore regard Swedenborg's theological works as his own in every respect, and deny that there is more of Divine authority contained in them than in the works and sermons of any other illuminated writer. They deny, therefore, that the Lord has effected His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and profess the theory to which we have already alluded, viz., that the Lord's Second Coming and the descent of the New Jerusalem are progressive, and take place in the minds

of men in general whether they are conscious of it or not.

The theory of those who profess these views has recently been expressed by the following train of argument:¹—"First, Divine Wisdom is infinite and inexhaustible; *secondly*, each angel or man can only receive of this Divine fulness in part, and according to the degree to which his mind is open; *thirdly*, in the communication of Divine Wisdom to any recipient mind that Divine Wisdom receives a tinge and assumes a form arising from the peculiarities of the mind into which it flows, its previous education, habits of thought, and individualities of feeling; *fourthly*, in the expression of the Divine Wisdom which any mind receives, the habits of utterance, modes of arrangement, and style of proof peculiar to that mind must necessarily determine the method and manner." The writer then sums up this argument (which he credits to Swedenborg, but which we, in all deference, are compelled to attribute to him, and not to Swedenborg) in these words: "(1) Divine Truth communicated to any mind is accommodated to the capacity of the recipient; (2) Divine Truth perceived in any mind is modified by the intellectual character of the percipient; (3) Divine Truth expressed by any mind follows the ordinary style to which the mind is accustomed. The only exception to these three principles is in the case of *personal and plenary inspiration*, in which the writer is no more than an amanuensis of the Divine Wisdom, the very words

¹ Minutes of the General Conference of the New Church in Great Britain, 1873.

which he records being the very words of the Lord. Such was the inspiration of the Word, but to which no addition will ever be made."

From this statement we see that those who hold these sentiments maintain that there is only one kind of inspiration, viz., that by which the letter of the Word was communicated, "but to which," as they say, "no addition will ever be made;" and we see also that the writer who penned this statement, asserts (1) that the doctrines of the internal sense, when they were communicated by the Lord to Swedenborg, were accommodated by him to Swedenborg's capacity; (2) that these doctrines, as perceived by Swedenborg, were modified by his intellectual character; by which the writer means that these doctrines, upon passing through Swedenborg's mind, "received a tinge and assumed a form arising from the peculiarities of his mind, his previous education, his habit of thought, and his individualities of feeling;" (3) that these doctrines, when expressed by Swedenborg, followed the ordinary style to which his mind was accustomed—by which the writer means, again, that "the habits of utterance, the modes of arrangement, and the style of proof peculiar to Swedenborg, necessarily determined the method and manner" in which these doctrines were expressed by him.

The writer, as may be seen by a reference to his argument, has not specially applied the same to Swedenborg, but he has applied it to *all men*, with "the *only* exception" of those who were "personally and plenarily inspired" in writing the letter of the Word. As Swedenborg, however, was not one of those by

whom the letter of the Word was written, he is, therefore, logically included by the writer among all the men on the other side to whom all those limitations in the reception of Divine Truth apply which are specified by him in his argument.

It appears, therefore, that the writer in the above argument has expressed the sentiments of those who maintain that Swedenborg, in conveying the doctrines of the New Jerusalem to mankind, was in a state of illustration similar to that which is enjoyed by all good men who are regenerated by the Lord, and that his illustration differed from theirs not in kind, but only in degree, *i.e.* in the degree existing between more and less.

Those, indeed, who attribute to Swedenborg a high degree of illustration, but who deny that he was *inspired* by the Lord, sometimes put the state of his illustration so high, that it almost seems as if they believed in his inspiration. So the very writer from whom we have quoted says immediately before his argument, "In order that he might know and understand, Swedenborg was permitted to see the facts of the spiritual world; but to preserve his mind from receiving any impressions from spirits, his source of mental guidance and illumination was from the Lord alone, the method of that illumination was that of rational perception infused into his mind, and the times at which this illumination was granted were while he was devoutly 'reading the Word.'"

If the writer had made this statement alone, and had said nothing before and nothing after it, the most zealous advocates of the Divinity of the teachings

contained in Swedenborg's theological writings might hail him as the expounder of their own belief; for if "Swedenborg was permitted to see the *facts* of the spiritual world," and if he had "rational perception infused into his mind from the Lord while he was reading the Word," there is nothing but the truth, and nothing short of the truth contained in his writings, and truth is Divine and infallible. But these same attributes of Divinity and infallibility which the writer apparently accords here to Swedenborg's teachings, in the very next paragraph he denies to him by declaring that the letter of the Word alone, "to which no addition will ever be made," is inspired, and hence infallible and of Divine authority.

We believe that these arguments were made in good faith, and that the writer and those that favour his ideas are far from desiring to break down the authority of the writings of the New Church; yet it is evident, also, that additional rational light is required on the subjects of "illustration" and "inspiration," in order that the members of the Church may be enabled to distinguish clearly wherein Swedenborg's "illustration" differed from that of other good men in the Church, and wherein his "inspiration" differed from that of those persons through whom the letter of the Word was written.

Both "illustration" and "inspiration" are caused by the Lord's presence with, and His influx into, man; but as the Lord is present with man, and flows into his spirit with His Holy Spirit or His Divine Proceeding, which is called in the writings of the Church the Divine Truth, it is necessary that we

should first of all have a clear idea of the Divine Truth. Let us, therefore, briefly state the doctrine of the Church on this subject :—

(36.) “The Divine Truth which is from the Lord is the only thing from which is everything else; for that which is the first is the only thing in that which follows and which is derived, because the latter is from the former” (*A. C.* 9407). “Divine Truth is the Lord in heaven, because the Lord is Good itself and Truth itself: for both proceed from Him; and what proceeds from Him is He Himself; hence the Lord is heaven: for the Divine Truth, which is from Him, and which is received by the angels, makes heaven” (*A. C.* 9503).

(37.) “Divine Truth proceeds from the Lord both immediately and mediately. That which proceeds immediately is above every understanding of the angels; but what proceeds mediately is accommodated to the angels in heaven, and also to men; for it passes through heaven, and puts on an angelic and human quality. But into this truth the Lord flows also immediately, and He thus leads the angels and men both mediately and immediately: for all things in general and in particular are from a First Esse, and order was so instituted that the First Esse should be present in the derivatives both mediately and immediately, thus equally in the last or ultimate as in the first of its order” (*A. C.* 7004).

The mode in which the mediate Divine Truth is derived from the immediate Divine Truth is as follows:—

(38.) “As the Divine Truth which proceeds immediately from the Lord is from the very Infinite Divine, therefore it cannot be received by any living substance which is finite, thus not by any angel; wherefore the Lord created successive substances by which, as by mediations, the Divine Truth proceeding immediately might be communicated. But the first successive medium derived from it is still too full of what is Divine, so that it cannot yet be received by any living substance which is finite, and thus not by any angel; wherefore the Lord created another successive medium, by which the Divine Truth proceeding immediately might be received as to some portion. This successive medium is the Divine Truth which is in heaven. The first two derivations are above the heavens, and are like radiant belts from a flaming substance encom-

passing the sun, which is the Lord. Such is the successive order even to the heaven which is nearest to the Lord, which is the third heaven, where are those that are innocent and wise. Hence these successions are continued even to the last heaven, and from the last heaven even to man's sensual and corporeal degree, which receives influx in the last place. It hence appears that there are continuous successions from the First, *i.e.* from the Lord, even to the last things which are with man—yea, to the last things which are in nature. The last things which are with man, as well as in nature, are comparatively inert, and hence cold, and they are comparatively general, and hence obscure. It appears, also, from this, that by these successive mediations there is a continuous connection of all things with the First Esse. According to these successions influx takes place; for the Divine Truth, which proceeds immediately from Divine Good, flows in successively; and on the way, or around each new successive medium, it becomes general, and thus grosser and more obscure, and it becomes slower, and consequently more inert and colder. It hence appears what is the Divine order of successive mediations, and hence of the various kinds of influx.

“It must be well understood, however, that Divine Truth, which flows into the third heaven which is nearest the Lord, flows in even into the last things of order without any successive mediation, and there rules and provides each and everything immediately from the First. It is thus that the successive things are kept in their order and connection” (*A. C.* 7270).

The various degrees of the mediate Divine Truth which are thus formed are described in *A. E.* 627, as follows:—

(39.) “Divine Truth in its descent proceeds according to degrees from the supreme or inmost to the lowest or last. Divine Truth in the supreme degree is such as is the Divine which proceeds immediately from the Lord; thus, such as is the Divine Truth above the heavens: as this is infinite, it cannot come to the perception of any angel. But Divine Truth of the *first* degree is that which comes to the perception of the angels of the inmost or third heaven; this is called Divine Truth Celestial, and from this is the wisdom of these angels. Divine Truth of the *second* degree is that which comes to the perception of the angels of the middle or second heaven, and which constitutes their wisdom and intelligence, and is called Divine Truth Spiritual. Divine Truth

of the *third* degree is that which comes to the perception of the angels of the ultimate or first heaven, and which constitutes their intelligence and knowledge, and is called Divine Truth Celestial-natural and Spiritual-natural. But Divine Truth of the *fourth* degree is that which comes to the perception of the men of the Church living in the world, and which constitutes their intelligence and knowledge : this is called Divine Truth Natural. The ultimate or last of this is called Divine Truth Sensual. These various kinds of Divine Truth are in their order according to their degrees in the Word ; and the Divine Truth in the last degree, or in the last of order, is such as is the Divine Truth in the literal sense for infants, and for the most simple among men who are sensual." Compare also *A. C.* 8443.

From these passages we learn that Divine Truth is indeed infinite and eternal, or "infinite and inexhaustible"—these are the attributes of the Divine Truth which proceeds *immediately* from the Lord ; but as this Divine Truth "cannot be received by any living substance which is finite, thus not by any angel," nor any man, therefore the Lord accommodated His Divine Truth to the reception of angels and men by creating "successive media," with which He clothes and encompasses the Divine Truth which proceeds immediately from Himself. Hence the Divine Truth which proceeds *mediately* from the Lord. In this mediate Divine truth, we further learn, there are various degrees, and these degrees reach from the highest heaven to the plane of man's natural existence in the world ; hence this Divine Truth is accommodated to the reception of the angels of each of the three heavens, to that of the spirits in the world of spirits, and to that of men in the natural world. And as man is created into the likeness both of the spiritual and of the natural worlds, it follows that in his spiritual part there are as many degrees as there are degrees in heaven, in the world of spirits, and

in the natural world taken all together, and that each of these degrees is formed and animated by a different degree of the Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord.

This is an important truth, bearing strongly on the subject before us, viz., that the Divine Truth is accommodated to each plane of man's thought before it even enters into his mind; and as man's mind is created out of this very Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord, it follows that he is thoroughly prepared and accommodated to the reception of the Divine Truth, and that it is by no means necessary that this Divine Truth should "receive a tinge," or that its Divine quality should be impaired in any way whatsoever, by being received by man. It *may* receive a tinge, and its Divine quality may be impaired, but it does not necessarily follow.

This accommodation of Divine Truth to every state of man's life, and hence to every state of his thought, is also a complete refutation of the charge of scepticism which is contained in the assumption that Divine Truth "receives a tinge," and thus is warped whenever it enters into an angelic or human mind; from which it would follow that man can never receive the real truth as it proceeds from the Lord, but only an approximation to it, the real truth being like a phantom which ever retreats from him. This charge of scepticism is actually made against Swedenborg by the writer of the argument quoted above, for he declares that "Swedenborg's whole philosophy enforces" this very scepticism.

Besides, if Divine Wisdom or Divine Truth is

necessarily "tinged" or warped whenever it is "communicated to a recipient mind," this mind must preserve this quality even upon receiving the truths from the letter of the Word, which the writer admits to be the product of genuine and plenary inspiration. Yea, the human mind must preserve this quality upon receiving statements of the truth or expressions of opinion from finite human beings; for if the letter of the Word receives a "tinge" upon entering man's mind, the words and ideas of every man must receive such a tinge, and be more or less warped, upon entering the understanding of every other man; so that in that case we can never be sure that our own words are correctly received and understood by others.

Let us be thankful, therefore, that man *is* able to receive the Divine Truth in the form in which it proceeds mediately from the Lord, and that he can receive it in that form from the Lord without its receiving necessarily a tinge from his imperfect finite nature.

We read further that the Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord is contained in the Word of God "according to its various degrees;" that, therefore, there is a degree in the Word of God accommodated to the angels of the celestial heaven, another to the angels of the second, a third to the angels of the first heaven, and an ultimate degree which is able to be received by men upon earth; and as man's mind is formed in accordance with the form of heaven, it follows that there must be a degree in his mind capable of receiving the internal-natural, another the spiritual, and a third the celestial sense

of the Word, and that man may receive these various senses of the Word without their becoming necessarily tinged and warped upon being communicated to his mind. And from this it finally follows that Swedenborg was able to receive from the Lord the doctrines of the celestial and spiritual senses of the Word without these doctrines becoming "tinged" or warped upon entering into his mind; yea, that these doctrines could be communicated by the Lord to mankind through the instrumentality of Swedenborg without it being necessary in the least that "the method and manner" in which these doctrines were given should have been determined "by the habits of utterance, the modes of arrangement, and the style of proof peculiar to Swedenborg."

As the Lord, however, has endowed man with the faculties of freedom and rationality, He has therefore granted him the power of receiving the Divine Truth or Divine Life either in the form in which it proceeds from the Lord, or else to shape it into any form that he likes; whence it follows that the receptive forms of man's mind determine the character and quality of the Divine Truth which he receives from the Lord. This, then, may seem to authorize the conclusion that Divine Truth or Divine Wisdom, upon being communicated to any human mind, receives a "tinge," and is shaped into man's own likeness. Such may be the case, but it does not necessarily follow; for by the faculties of freedom and rationality which the Lord preserves intact in every human being, He imparts to him the power of receiving pure and inviolate the Lord's Divine Truth, *i.e.* the Divine

Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord ; and if he allows himself to be regenerated by the Lord, he becomes in time, as to his internal and external man, a pure vessel of the Divine Truth proceeding mediately from the Lord, in which this does not receive the slightest "tinge" or aberration. Still, as he remains for ever finite, he can never receive the whole of the Divine Wisdom in his mind ; yet this does not, and cannot, prevent the Lord Himself from making use of a human being in revealing by his means as much of His mediate Divine Truth as men are able to receive. And as it is admitted by all believing Christians that the Lord has made use of human instrumentality in revealing to mankind the whole of His sensual Divine Truth which is contained in the letter or the literal sense of Scripture, those that believe in the spiritual sense of Scripture, *i.e.* who believe that the Lord's mediate Divine Truth is also in the natural, spiritual, and celestial heavens, are bound to believe that the Lord could make use of human instrumentality in revealing to mankind the Divine Truth as it is in heaven, *i.e.* as much of it as mankind in this world are able to receive.

We have seen thus far that man is able to receive the Divine Truth proceeding mediately from the Lord without warping it or imparting a tinge to it. We shall now investigate the conditions under which he is able to receive the Divine Truth in this pure and uncontaminated form ; but in order to base this investigation on a solid rational foundation, we must continue the discussion of mediate and immediate Divine

Truth from the writings of the New Church, and show the influx of these two kinds of truth into the human mind :—

(40.) “There are three kinds of good which constitute the three heavens : (1) The good of love to the Lord, which is called celestial good, and constitutes the inmost heaven; (2) the good of charity towards the neighbour, which is called spiritual good, and constitutes the second heaven; and (3) the good of faith, which is called natural-spiritual good, and constitutes the first heaven. Into the celestial good, which is of the inmost heaven, the Lord flows immediately from His Divine Humanity; into the spiritual good, which is of the second heaven, the Lord flows in from His Divine Humanity, and also mediately by celestial good; and into natural-spiritual good, which is of the ultimate heaven, the Lord flows in immediately, and likewise again mediately. It is said here ‘likewise mediately,’ because the Lord flows into the goods of these heavens not only mediately, but also immediately” (*A. C.* 10,270).

And again we read :—“That which flows in immediately arranges, and that which flows in mediately is arranged; so it is in the exterior-rational [or spiritual degree], and also in the natural” (*A. C.* 5150).

As man is a least heaven, and as his mind is therefore organized into three degrees corresponding to the three heavens, it follows from the above that the Lord flows immediately into the celestial degree of his mind, and that He flows in immediately, and likewise mediately, first into his spiritual, secondly into his natural, and finally into his sensual or corporeal degree, by the last of which he is enabled to live as a human being in the natural world.

The Lord, as we see here, flows *immediately* into each degree of man’s spiritual nature from His Divine Humanity. Every one of the degrees constituting man’s spiritual nature was glorified by the Lord in

His Divine Humanity. There is hence in the Lord's Divine Humanity a celestial, a spiritual, a natural, and a corporeal degree, and from these degrees the Lord can flow immediately into the celestial, spiritual, natural, and corporeal degrees with man; but into each of these degrees, with the exception of the celestial, the Lord flows in also *mediately* by the heavens.

These two influxes interpenetrate one another, they being related like heat and light; yet of the immediate influx man is utterly unconscious, because it is Divinely human, but of the Lord's mediate influx through heaven he becomes conscious, because this has put on a heavenly, and thus a human form, as may appear from the following important passage:—

(41.) “The Divine Truth proceeding immediately from the Lord's Divine Humanity can neither be heard nor perceived by any man, and not even by any angel. In order that it may be heard and perceived there must be mediation, which mediation takes place by heaven, and thus by the angels and spirits with man. This may be shown clearly from this circumstance, that man cannot even hear the spirits who are with him conversing with one another; and if he could hear them, he could not have any perception, because the language of spirits is without human expression, and is the universal of all languages. And, further, spirits cannot hear angels; and if they heard them, they would have no perception, for the language of angels is still more universal. Yea, the angels of the inmost heaven can still less be heard and perceived, because their language is not the language of ideas, but of the affections belonging to celestial love. If now these modes of speech are so far removed from man that they cannot on any consideration be heard and perceived by him, how much less can the Divine language, which is infinitely above the modes of speech in heaven, be heard and perceived by him! I have said here ‘Divine language,’ but there is meant by it the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord's Divine Humanity. Such being the case, it may appear that in order that the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord may be heard and perceived, it must pass to man by media-

tions. The last mediation is by the spirit who is with man, and who flows in either by his thought or by the living voice.

“That the Divine Truth proceeding immediately from the Lord can neither be heard nor perceived, appears also from correspondences, and hence from representatives: inasmuch as that which is spoken by man is presented differently before spirits; and what is spoken by spirits is presented differently before angels, as may appear from the spiritual sense of the Word and its literal sense. For the literal sense which is accommodated to man is representative and significative of the things of the spiritual sense; which sense cannot be perceived by man, except in proportion as it may be presented and expounded by such things as belong to the world and nature; and still less can the angelic sense be thus perceived. And how much less can the Divine Truth which proceeds immediately from the Lord's Divine be thus perceived, as it is infinitely above the understanding of the angels, and cannot be perceived in heaven, except in proportion as it has flowed through heaven, and put on a form accommodated and suitable to the perception of those who are there. This takes place by a wonderful influx which cannot be comprehended by any one” (*A. C.* 6996).

There flows, then, into man immediate influx from the Lord's Divine Humanity, of which he is utterly unconscious, and the Lord's mediate influx through the heavens which is accommodated to the state of his consciousness, and these two influxes flow into each of the degrees of which man's spiritual nature is composed. Let us inquire now, where in each of these degrees are the receptacles of immediate, and where are those of mediate influx. To this question we obtain the following answer:—

(42.) “The truth which proceeds immediately from the Divine enters into man's will—this is the way; but the truth which proceeds mediately from the Divine enters into man's understanding” (*A. C.* 7056).

We see, therefore, that the Lord by His immediate influx is present in man's will, and by His mediate influx in man's understanding, and by His presence

in man's will He causes his freedom of will (*D. L. W.* 264), and by His presence in man's understanding his faculty of reason or his rationality (*A. C.* 5668).

Such is the doctrine of the New Church on the subject of immediate and mediate influxes from the Lord, and their reception by man, and for the sake of convenient reference we shall now summarize its teachings:—

I. The Divine Truth proceeding immediately from the Lord's Divine Humanity is understood by immediate influx. This influx takes place from the various degrees of the Lord's Divine Humanity, and by means of it the Lord flows immediately into the celestial, the spiritual, the internal-natural, and the external-sensual degrees of man's spiritual nature. This influx, of which man is totally unconscious, is received by him in his will, and the reception of this influx causes in him his freedom of will.

II. The Divine Truth proceeding mediately from the Lord's Divine Humanity is understood by mediate influx. This form of Divine Truth is encompassed by the Lord with several successive media before it reaches heaven, and additional media are added to it as it proceeds from the higher to the lower heavens, and finally to man. This influx is received by man in his understanding, and by this influx there is imparted to man his faculty of reason or his rationality.

A summary statement of other portions of this doctrine, with references to the writings of the New Church, we herewith subjoin:—

III. Mediate influx, again, is of a twofold nature, for it may either be general or particular. The general

influx is from the Grand Man of heaven in general ; the particular influx from the angels and spirits that are associated with man (*A. C.* 5850, 5862). The particular influx by the angels is from the Lord, and is determined by the Lord ; but the particular influx by spirits is determined by man himself (*A. C.* 4067, 4073).

IV. Before regeneration, and in the beginning of regeneration, man is associated with spirits from the world of spirits, mostly evil ; the influx from these spirits takes place into man's understanding, and by the understanding into his will, and this influx is wonderfully tempered and directed by the Lord's immediate influx into man's will (*A. C.* 9683). Wherefore man before regeneration and during regeneration is governed by the Lord's immediate influx (*A. C.* 8685).

V. When man's regeneration is accomplished, then he no longer governs himself, but is governed by the Lord ; and then the Lord governs him not only by immediate influx into his will, but also by mediate influx into his understanding. Then also will and understanding, good and truth, mediate and immediate influx in him, are conjoined (*A. C.* 7056).

After this preliminary investigation into the nature of immediate and mediate influx, we are enabled to approach intelligently the subjects of *revelation*, *inspiration*, and *illustration*, and here we must first direct the attention of the man of the Church to the twofold nature of revelation, which is most clearly described in the following passage :—

(43.) “Revelations are either from perception or from speech with

angels through whom the Lord speaks. It must be observed that those who are in good, and hence in truth, especially those who are in the good of love to the Lord, have revelation from perception; and that those who are not in good, nor in truth thence, may indeed have revelations, not however from perception, but by a living voice heard within them, and thus by angels from the Lord. This revelation is external, but the other internal. Revelation from perception is enjoyed by the angels, and especially the celestial angels; it was also enjoyed by the men of the most ancient Church, by a few of the ancient, but scarcely by any one at the present day. Revelations from speech without perception, however, were received by many, even by such as were not in good; they were received also through visions or dreams. Most of the revelations that took place by the prophets in the Jewish Church were of that nature: they heard a voice, saw a vision, and dreamt a dream; but as they had no perception, they were merely verbal or visual revelations, and they did not perceive what was signified thereby. For genuine perception exists through heaven from the Lord, and affects the intellectual faculty in a spiritual manner, leading it perceptibly to think in accordance with the real nature of things, and which is likewise connected with an internal assent of which one does not know the source. The person enjoying such perception supposes it to be intrinsically in himself, and to flow from the connection of things; yet it is a dictate flowing in from the Lord by heaven into the interiors of his thought, and conveying instruction on such things as are above the natural and sensual, *i.e.* on such things as belong to the spiritual world or heaven. The nature of revelation from perception may hence be known" (*A. C.* 5121).

We see, therefore, that there are two kinds of revelation; there is *internal revelation* or "revelation from perception," and *external revelation* or "revelations from speech, also from visions or dreams, without perception." We further learn that internal revelation existed "with the men of the most ancient Church, with a few of the ancient, but scarcely with any one at the present day;" while external revelations took place with the "prophets in the Jewish Church." It is therefore distinctly stated here that

internal revelation was not limited to the men of the most ancient Church, but that it existed also with "a few of the ancient Church ;" and the possibility is even admitted of such internal revelation existing at the present day, although it is said that "it scarcely exists with any one at the present day."

In this passage, also, external is not placed above internal revelation. It is not stated that the revelation made to the Jews was preferable to that which was made to the men of the most ancient Church ; nor is it stated that Divine Truth upon being internally revealed to man "receives a tinge, and assumes a form, arising from the peculiarities of the mind into which it flows, its previous education, habits of thought, and individualities of feeling," and that it is excepted from these modifications when revealed externally to men, that is, "in the case of *personal and plenary inspiration*, in which the writer is no more than an amanuensis of the Divine Wisdom, the very words he records being the very words of the Lord." No such distinction is made at all in the passage under consideration, and not the slightest reason is given from which we may infer that internal revelation is inferior to external revelation, or that it is less Divine.

It is by such *internal revelation* that the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word of God were revealed by the Lord to Emanuel Swedenborg, and on that ground we maintain that the revelation of Divine Truth made through him is as fully Divine, and comes to us with the same force of Divine authority as does the letter of the Word of God, which was communicated by external revelation.

And, again, if the writers of the letter of the Word, who were instructed by external revelation, were *inspired* by God what to write, and if both external and internal revelation are of Divine origin and of the same Divine authority, it follows that Swedenborg also was inspired by the Lord in writing the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word of God; but that while the prophets and evangelists were *externally inspired*, Swedenborg was *internally inspired*.

Swedenborg's inspiration therefore, we maintain, was internal, while that of the writers of the letter of the Word was external; and the nature and the conditions of this internal inspiration are described by him in the passage just read, in these words:—"It is to be observed that those who are in good, and hence in truth, especially those who are in the good of love to the Lord, have revelation from perception. . . . Genuine perception exists through heaven from the Lord, and affects the intellectual faculty in a spiritual manner, leading it perceptibly to think in accordance with the real nature of things, and it is likewise connected with an internal assent, of which one does not know the source. The person enjoying such perception supposes it to be intrinsically in himself, and to flow from the connection of things; yet it is a dictate flowing in from the Lord by heaven into the interiors of his thought, and conveying instruction on such things as are above the natural and sensual, *i.e.* on such things as belong to the spiritual world or heaven."

In these words, we maintain, Swedenborg describes one of his own states; and we maintain, further, that

unless he had been in this state he could not have described it.

But let us endeavour to throw additional light on the subject of internal revelation or of *internal inspiration*; and this we do by bringing to bear upon it the doctrine of mediate and immediate influx, and especially the principle contained in No. V. of our summary statement of that doctrine, which is as follows:—“When man’s regeneration is accomplished, then he no longer governs himself, but is governed by the Lord; and then the Lord governs him not only by immediate influx into his will, but also by mediate influx into his understanding. Then also will and understanding, good and truth, mediate and immediate influx in him, are conjoined.” For, as we shall presently see, the conjunction of mediate and immediate influx in man is but another expression of those conditions under which he is able to receive from the Lord “revelation from perception,” or *internal inspiration*. Besides, if we have a clear conception of the states in which these two Divine influxes are and are not conjoined in man, we shall be able to discriminate more precisely between internal and external inspiration, and also to define rationally that state in which man is neither internally nor externally inspired. We read:—

(44.) “Those who think and teach in accordance with the truth of their Church in which they are confirmed, and also who do not know whether these things are true except from this consideration that they were drawn from the doctrines of their Church and transmitted by learned men who are in illustration; with these there may exist the truth proceeding mediately from the Divine, but still it is not conjoined with the truth which proceeds immediately from the Divine; for if it

were conjoined they would be in the affection of truth for the sake of truth, and especially for the sake of life: and hence also they would be gifted with the perception as to whether the doctrinals of their Church were true before confirming themselves in them; and they would also see in each single thing whether the things confirming agreed with the truth.

“The prophets, by whom the Word was written, wrote as the spirit from the Divine dictated; for the very words which they wrote were enunciated in their ears. With them was the truth which proceeds mediately from the Divine, *i.e.* by heaven; but not so the truth which proceeds immediately from the Divine; for they had no perception of what each single thing signified in the internal sense; because when these two are conjoined, then, as was said above, there is perception.

“This conjunction exists very rarely with man, but it exists with all in heaven, and especially with those who are in the inmost or third heaven; nor does it exist with man before he is regenerated so far that he can be elevated above his sensual, even towards his rational, and thus continue in the light in which the angels are.

“With every man there is immediate, as well as mediate, influx; but conjunction of the two exists only with those who have perception of truth from good; for those with whom the immediate Divine influx is conjoined with the mediate allow themselves to be led by the Lord, but those with whom these two influxes are not conjoined lead themselves, and love this” (*A. C.* 7055).

This passage is important, because Dr. Beyer, a personal friend of Swedenborg, referred to it in his valuable Index to Swedenborg's Theological Works (vol. i. p. 466) in defining the nature of Swedenborg's perception.

From this passage we learn, on the one hand, that those with whom the mediate and immediate influxes are conjoined are “in the affection of truth for the sake of truth, and especially for the sake of life,” and that “they allow themselves to be led by the Lord;” and, on the other hand, we learn that “this conjunc-

tion exists with all in heaven, and especially with those who are in the inmost or third heaven," and also that "it exists with man when he is so far regenerated that he can continue in the light in which the angels are."

From this it follows that the conjunction of mediate and immediate influx, which is productive of a state of perception, is caused by regeneration ; and while it would result from this that Dr. Beyer, in applying this passage to Swedenborg, attributed to him an advanced stage of regeneration, this passage nevertheless also proves that with all other regenerate persons there is likewise a conjunction of mediate and immediate influx, and from this it would seem to follow that they also are able to come into a similar state of perception.

We quite agree that this appears to be a legitimate conclusion from this passage ; yet if this conjunction "exists with all in heaven," there must be differences in this conjunction. At least, this conjunction must differ in the first, second, and third heavens ; for the Divine Truth, both that which proceeds mediately and that which proceeds immediately from the Lord, differs in each of the heavens (see numbers 39 and 40) ; besides, the good in which this conjunction is effected (*A. C.* 7056) likewise differs in each of the heavens ; and if this conjunction which causes perception is different in each of the heavens, it follows that the perception resulting thence must also differ in degree.

If, however, the conjunction of mediate and immediate influx differs so much among the angels of heaven, it must differ in like manner with the men

who suffer themselves to be regenerated by the Lord on earth. A man, therefore, will be endowed with a different degree of perception, according as his mind by regeneration has been opened either to the first, second, or third degree, and as he by regeneration becomes associated with angels either of the first, second, or third heaven.

It is only when he is regenerated as to his celestial degree, thus when he is no longer animated by spiritual, but by celestial love, that he is in the condition in which he may be "internally inspired," or "receive revelation from perception." When he is regenerated only as to his spiritual degree, thus when he loves the truth for the sake of truth, and not so much for the sake of good, then he is in a state of *illustration*, but not in a state of perception, and the revelation he receives is "revelation from illustration," but not "revelation from perception," which is quite a different thing. That there is such a difference between illustration and perception is very evident by the following passage:—

(45.) "Those who love the truth for the sake of truth are *in illustration*, and those who love truth for the sake of good are *in perception*" (A. C. 10,290).

That the same difference exists between "revelation from illustration," and "revelation from perception," appears from a rational consideration of the following passages:—

(46.) "There is a revelation which does not take place with a loud voice, but interiorly in man. This revelation is caused by an illustration of the internal sight, which is the understanding, when a man who

is in the affection of truth from good reads the Word. The light of heaven, which is from the Lord as a sun there, causes this illustration; and by this light the understanding is illustrated scarcely otherwise than the external sight, which is of the eye, is illuminated by the light of the world. When the understanding is enlightened by this Divine light it perceives that to be true which is true; it acknowledges it interiorly in itself, and sees it in a certain manner. Such is the revelation of those who are in the affection of truth from good when they read the Word. Those, however, who are in the affection of truth from evil, thus who desire to know truths simply on account of honours, gains, fame, and the like, see only confirming proofs of the doctrinals of their Church whether they be true or false" (*A. C.* 8780).

This same revelation, which exists with the man whose spiritual degree is opened, and who is influenced by the love of truth for the sake of truth, is described in the following passage :—

(47.) "The quality of the revelation which they have who are in good, and thence in the affection of truth, cannot be described; it is not manifest, nor is it altogether hidden; but it is a certain favouring and consent from the interior that a thing is true, and a disfavouring if it is not true. When there is a favouring, the mind is serene and at rest, and in this state there is the acknowledgment which is of faith. The cause of this is an influx of heaven from the Lord; for through heaven there comes from the Lord the light which beams around and enlightens the understanding, which is the eye of internal sight. Those things which then appear in that light are true; for this light itself is the Divine Truth which proceeds from the Lord" (*A. C.* 8694; compare also *T. C. R.* 231).

From these passages we learn that those who have revelation by illustration "are able by their understanding to perceive that to be true which is true, to acknowledge it interiorly in themselves, and to see it in a certain manner," we see also that this revelation consists in "a certain favouring and consent from the interior that a thing is true, and a disfavouring if it is not true;" this state also is identical with *faith* in its

genuine sense. Every one who is in a state of good, and who loves the truth for the sake of truth, comes into such a state of illustration, and receives from the Lord that "revelation" which has been described in these two passages. Yet Swedenborg expressly declares, "The Lord teaches every one by the Word, and He teaches him *from the knowledges that are with him*, and does not immediately pour into him new knowledges" (*T. C. R.* 208; compare also *A. C.* 3508, 10,400; *A. E.* 825).

We see, therefore, that the state of illustration which is attained by the men of the Church generally when they "are in good, and thence in the affection of truth," does not enable them to receive *new* truths from the Lord. It therefore does not enable them to make additions to the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word, nor would it have enabled Swedenborg, if he had enjoyed only this kind of illustration, to receive the doctrines of the New Jerusalem from the Lord in the first place.

Swedenborg, therefore, enjoyed a higher state of illustration, yea, he enjoyed *perception* from the Lord, and the revelation with which he was gifted by the Lord was "the revelation from perception," which has been described before; with Swedenborg, therefore, the Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord was conjoined with the Divine Truth that proceeds immediately, in the same manner and in the same degree, in which they are conjoined with the angels of the third heaven, and he therefore enjoyed that perception which is described in the following passage:—

(48.) "Instruction on every point of doctrine takes place when the truth which proceeds immediately from the Lord's Divine is conjoined with the truth which proceeds mediately, for then perception is given. This conjunction takes place principally with the angels who are of the third or inmost heaven, and who are called celestial. They have the most exquisite perception of both kinds of truth, and hence of the Lord's presence ; because they are in good above others, for they have the good of innocence : hence they are nearest the Lord, and are in refulgent and almost flaming light ; for they see the Lord as a sun, and its rays of light are of such a quality on account of their proximity to it " (A. C. 7058).

From this passage, in connection with our former number on this subject (No. 44), we learn that in order "to receive instruction on every point of doctrine from the Lord by perception," man must possess the following requirements :—

(a) He must be in good (No. 48).

(b) He must have a most exquisite perception of both kinds of truth, the mediate and the immediate, and hence of the Lord's presence (No. 48).

(c) He must be able to see the Lord as a sun (No. 48).

(d) He must be regenerated so far that he can be elevated above his sensual, even towards his rational, and thus be able to continue in the light in which the angels are (No. 44).

Our object will now be to prove that all these conditions were fulfilled by Swedenborg.

(a) *Swedenborg was in a state of good.*

(49.) "It was observed, and also instilled into my mind, that everything that a man has done in the life of the body returns in the other life ; for there are perpetual changes of state, into which a man is introduced ; so that there is not a single state of the life of the body which does not return in the other life ; consequently hatreds, and the like,

which a man has not only done, but also thought. . . . But it is to be observed that with the evil, all the evils which they have done and thought return in a most vivid manner: while with those who are in good and in faith such is not the case; for with them all the states of good, of friendship, and of love return with the greatest delight and felicity. *Experimental proof that there was no evil with me*" (S. D. 4109).

(b) *Swedenborg had an exquisite perception of the Divine Truth proceeding mediately and immediately from the Lord, and hence of the Lord's presence.*

The peculiar perception which Swedenborg enjoyed both while reading the Word and while he was as to his spirit in the spiritual world, will be described more minutely hereafter; for the present the following passages will suffice to confirm this statement:—

(50.) "It was given me to perceive distinctly what came from the Lord [immediate influx], and what from the angels [mediate influx]; what came from the Lord I wrote down, and what came from the angels I did not write down" (A. E. 1183).

(51.) "During an hour's time it was shown to me by experience how all thoughts are directed by the Lord. It was an influx like that of an extremely soft and almost imperceptible stream, the source of which does not appear, and which yet leads and draws. That which flowed in from the Lord led every series of my thoughts in succession, and although gently, yet so powerfully, that I could by no means stray away into other thoughts. I tried to do so, but in vain" (A. C. 6474).

(c, d) *Swedenborg was able to see the Lord as a sun, and he was regenerated so far that he could be elevated above his sensual, even towards his rational, and thus continue in the light in which the angels are.*

That Swedenborg was capable "of being elevated above the sensual degree, even towards the rational, and of continuing in the light in which the angels

are," is clearly proved by the statement he made in the *T. C. R.* 851, to which additions might easily be made from other parts of his writings, viz., "It was given me to be in the spiritual world with the angels for upwards of twenty-seven years." The nature of his intercourse with the angels of heaven, and at the same time the quality of the light which he enjoyed there, he describes thus :—

(52.) "I have been in conversation with spirits and angels now for many years, nor did any spirit dare, nor any angel wish, to tell me anything, and still less to instruct me in anything in the Word, or in any point of doctrine drawn from the Word; but the Lord alone taught me, who revealed Himself to me, and afterwards appeared, and still appears, before my eyes like the sun, in which He Himself is, such as He appears to the angels, and illustrated me" (*D. P.* 135).

Finally, that Swedenborg was in a celestial state, and hence enjoyed the perception of truth peculiar to that state, he himself declares in so many words on the fly-leaf of one of his Biblical Indexes, where he has marked the very date when he was introduced into that state. This memorable passage, which has been reproduced on the last page of vol. x. of his photo-lithographed MSS., reads as follows :—"1747, August 7, old style [of reckoning] : There was a change of state in me into the celestial kingdom in an image" (*mutatio status in me, in cœleste regnum, in imagine*).

But what does Swedenborg mean by his statement that there has been "a change of state in him into the celestial kingdom *in an image*"? An answer to this question is found on the last page of a tract on which he was engaged a short time before his death, and which contains the full plan of his unfinished

Coronis. It was printed by Dr. Immanuel Tafel in Appendix I. to his Latin edition of the *Spiritual Diary*. We read there :—

(53.) “In place of the miracles that were done in the Church before the Lord’s Coming, at the present time there has been a manifestation of the Lord Himself, an introduction into the spiritual world, and there, by immediate light from the Lord, illustration in such things as constitute the interiors of the Church ; but principally an opening of the spiritual sense of the Word, in which the Lord is in His Divine light. These revelations are not miracles ; for every man as to his spirit is in the spiritual world, yet without being separated from his body in the natural world. In my case, however, there is a certain separation, but only as to the intellectual part of my mind, *and not as to my will-part*” (pp. 168, 169).

As to his intellectual part, therefore, Swedenborg was removed from the trammels of space and time, but not as to his will-part ; and by this is meant, that although his will-part was regenerated as to the celestial degree, yet it remained as much tied down to his body on earth as it remains tied down with all those on earth who are becoming, or have become, regenerated as far as the celestial degree of their minds. How much this being tied down to the body in the natural world affects the spiritual state of those who become regenerated in this life, is shown in the following passage :—

(54.) “The illustration of the natural mind [*i.e.* of man in the natural world] does not ascend by discrete degrees, but it increases in a continuous degree, and in proportion as it increases there is illustration from the interior by the light of the two superior degrees. The natural mind may, therefore, be elevated even into the light of heaven in which the angels are, and may perceive naturally, and thus not so fully, what the angels perceive spiritually ; but, nevertheless, the natural mind of man cannot be elevated into the very light of the angels. When man’s

natural mind is raised into the light of heaven, he can think and even speak with the angels ; but then the thought and speech of the angels flow into the natural thought and speech of the man, and not *vice versa* ; on which account the angels speak with man in natural language, thus in his mother-tongue. This takes place by a spiritual influx into the natural, and not by any natural influx into the spiritual. Human wisdom, therefore, which is natural as long as man lives in the natural world, cannot on any consideration be raised into angelic wisdom, but *only into a certain image of it*” (*D. L. W.* 256, 257).

From all of this we learn, that since Swedenborg as to his intellectual part could be separated from his natural body, he could receive from the Lord by perception “instruction on every point of doctrine,” even as this is received by the angels of the highest heaven who are in perception from the Lord (see No. 48), and he could thus obtain from the Lord that internal revelation which consists in “a dictate flowing in from the Lord by heaven into the interiors of the thought, and conveying instruction on such things as are above the natural and sensual, *i.e.* on such things as belong to the spiritual world or heaven” (see No. 43).

No man in this world can come into such a state of perception, even if he should be regenerated to the same high degree in which Swedenborg was, unless his intellectual part be separated from his natural body in the way, in which this was the case with Swedenborg. This is, however, such an exceptional state that presumably no one after Swedenborg will ever come into a like state, even as no one before him had ever been in such a state. This is asserted by him in the following clear language:—

(55.) “The manifestation of the Lord and introduction into the

spiritual world, is superior to all miracles. This has not been granted to any one since the creation as it has been to me. The men of the golden age, indeed, conversed with the angels; but it was not granted them to be in any other than natural light; but to me it was granted to be at the same time in natural and in spiritual light. It was granted to me thereby to see the wonderful things of heaven, to be among the angels like one of them, and at the same time to imbibe truths in light, and thus to perceive and teach them, and consequently to be led by the Lord" (*Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*, No. 52, contained in the *Spiritual Diary*, Appendix I. p. 157).

This exceptional state was granted by the Lord only to Swedenborg, because he was to be the instrument through whom the Lord would effect His Second Coming. Yet while Swedenborg was thus able to be separated as to his intellectual faculty from his natural body, and to associate with the angels of heaven and enjoy their measure of perception, as to his will-faculty he was not separated from his natural body. As to the state of his good, therefore, he remained subject to all the limitations of the natural world. As to his understanding he was released from the bondage of nature and mingled with the angels as their equal, but as to his will he remained on the earth and was a man among men; as to truths and doctrines, he was able to penetrate into their least particulars like the angels of the highest heaven, but as to his good he remained in generals. On this account, also, he says that "there was a change of state in me into the celestial kingdom *in an image*," even as we read that human wisdom, as long as man lives in the natural world, *i.e.* as long as his intellectual faculty remains bound to his natural body, cannot "on any consideration be raised into angelic

wisdom, but *only into a certain image of it*" (see No. 54).

If, therefore, Swedenborg as to his will-part, or as to his good, remained in the generals belonging to the natural world, even though this general good was *the image* of the highest celestial good, it is altogether unreasonable to maintain that the truths which he was able to see, corresponded to his state of goodness, or that the state of his illustration depended upon his regeneration.

But if, on the contrary, the truth which Swedenborg was enabled to see did *not* correspond to the state of his good, or if his truth was *not* the form of his good, then this truth could only have been instilled into him by the Lord Himself, and thus be communicated to him only by a process of internal revelation or *internal inspiration*.

We see, therefore, that the mode by which the nature of Swedenborg's illustration or inspiration is accounted for by many, that it was the result of his regeneration, and thus was modified and determined by the state of his good, cannot be correct; and that the other idea, which has likewise been advanced, that it depended entirely on the state of his rational mind as to truth, and thus was independent of his state of good, has more of truth in it. Yet, in proportion as those who hold this second idea maintain that Swedenborg's state of inspiration was entirely independent of the state of his regeneration, in the same proportion also their idea becomes incorrect and faulty. For, as we had already occasion to show, the state of Swedenborg's regeneration, or the state of his

good, was a most important factor in introducing him into his state of inspiration. The precise share, however, which good has in all cases of illustration, perception, and inspiration will appear from a consideration of the following passages :—

(56.) “Illustration and apperception cannot exist unless there is affection or love, which is spiritual heat, to impart life to those things which are illustrated by light, comparatively as the light of the sun does not give life to plants, but the heat in the light, as appears from the seasons of the year” (*A. C.* 3138). “When a man is in good, and from good in truths, he is raised into the Divine light, and according to the quantity and quality of good into such as is more or less interior. Hence he has general illustration in which he sees innumerable truths which he perceives from good; and he is then led by the Lord to apperceive and appropriate those that are suitable to himself, and this in respect to the most singular things in order, according as it is conducive to his eternal life” (*A. C.* 9407). “The light of truth with a man is altogether according to the state of his love; in proportion as the love is kindled, the truth shines; for the good of love is the very vital fire, and the truth of faith the very intellectual light which is intelligence and wisdom: they must proceed at a like pace” (*A. C.* 10,201).

(57.) “All illustration is from good; for the good of love is comparatively as the flame of the sun which is heat and light; but truth is as the object through which the flame shines—hence illustration is by light, and according to the quality of the light thence, so is the illustration. Truth alone receives good, but according to the quality of the truth such is the reception and such is the illustration. When, therefore, there is illustration by truth, then there is an appearance as if the illustration was from truth, when yet it belongs to the good which shines through the truth in this manner” (*A. C.* 3094).

(58.) “The Lord flows in and is present with a man in his good which he receives from the Lord: for good constitutes the man himself, and every one is such as is his good. By good is understood love, for all that is loved is called good. It is thought that the Lord is present in the truth of what is called faith; but He is not present in truth without good; but when there is good, then the Lord is present in the truth by good, and He is present in it in the same proportion in which it leads to good, and in which it proceeds from good” (*A. C.* 10,153).

As the Lord is present with a man in good, and as He flows into the good that is with him, and by the good into his truth, and as according to the quality and the degree of good, such is the quality and the degree of the illustration, and thus of the perception which he receives from the Lord, it hence follows that the Lord was present with Swedenborg also in his good, and that He flowed into him by good, and that according to the excellency of the good in Swedenborg was the excellency of the illustration that he was able to receive from the Lord. It was therefore not only important, but it was even absolutely necessary, that Swedenborg should have been in a most advanced degree of regeneration, in order to receive from the Lord the highest possible illustration which He is able to accord to human minds.

Besides, the conjunction of mediate and immediate influx, which was ascribed by Dr. Beyer to Swedenborg, and which is the indispensable condition by which angels and men are able to come into a state of perception from the Lord, takes place exclusively in good, as we read in the following passage :—

(59.) “The conjunction of the truth immediately proceeding from the Divine with the truth which proceeds mediately, can only take place in good, consequently only if a man is affected with truth for the sake of truth, and especially for the sake of good, and consequently for the sake of life; for then the man is in good. How it is with this conjunction may also appear from this consideration: the truth which proceeds immediately from the Divine enters into man’s will—this is its way; but the truth which proceeds mediately from the Divine enters into man’s understanding; wherefore this conjunction cannot take place unless the will and the understanding act as one, *i.e.* unless the will will the good, and the understanding confirm it by the truth;

when this conjunction therefore takes place, the Lord appears as though He were present, and His presence is also perceived; but if the conjunction does not take place, then the Lord is as it were absent; but His absence is not perceived unless it be known from some perception what His presence is" (*A. C.* 7056).

Swedenborg's regeneration, or the state of his good, had therefore very much to do with his inspiration; for it enabled him to receive the Lord's influx, and also to perceive it, yet it did not determine the measure of his inspiration; for not only was he as to his intellectual faculty separated from his natural body, which was the result of a special act of Divine Providence, and did not depend upon his state of goodness; but the measure of illustration with man in general is also actually determined by the truths and the knowledges of the truth which are in his understanding, and which are the ultimate vessels in his mind receptive of Divine influx.

This is another most important particular which is not sufficiently taken into consideration by those who maintain that the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word are incomplete in their present form, and that they require to be supplemented by other men who are able to come into a like state of illustration to that which was enjoyed by Swedenborg. For in order to supplement Swedenborg's work they would have to be not only in a similar state as to good, but also in a similar state as to truths or knowledges. They would, therefore, have to acquire the same enormous amount of natural knowledge which Swedenborg accumulated during the first fifty-seven years of his life, and, besides, all that supernatural knowledge

which he acquired during the twenty-eight or twenty-nine years his spiritual sight was opened.

That the measure of a man's illustration is determined by the knowledges of the truth with him, is proved from No. 57, where we learn that "all illustration is by good," *i.e.* that no one who is not in good can be in illustration; but where this statement is at the same time qualified by this declaration: "Truth alone receives good, but according to the quality of the truth, such is the reception and such is the illustration."

As the importance of knowledges or of receptive vessels in illustration or perception is frequently underrated, or even ignored, in the New Church, we propose to give the doctrine of the Church on this subject *in extenso* :—

(60.) "Without the knowledges of what is good and true the natural cannot be illustrated from, or by, the rational; hence it cannot be regenerated. Knowledges are the recipient vessels of the good and truth which flow in by the rational. According to the quantity and quality of the reception by the vessel will be the quantity and quality of the illustration" (*A. C.* 3508).

(61.) "By instruction the interiors and thus the internals are formed and adapted for the reception of the goods of love and the truths of faith, and thus for the perception of good and truth: for *no one can perceive what he does not know and believe*; hence he cannot be gifted with the faculty of perceiving the existence and the quality of the good of love and the truth of faith, except by knowledges" (*A. C.* 1802).

(62.) "The Lord teaches every one by the Word, and *He teaches him from the knowledges that are with him*, and does not immediately pour into him new knowledges" (*T. C. R.* 208).

"The man who is led by the Lord is taught by Him from day to day what he is to do and to speak, and also what he is to preach and write; for when evils are removed, then he is continually under the Lord's auspices, and enjoys illustration. But he is led and taught by

the Lord, not immediately by any perceptible inspiration, but by influx into his spiritual delight, whence *he has perception according to the truths of which his understanding is composed*" (A. E. 825).

Moreover, that the measure of the doctrine of the internal sense which man is able to receive from the Lord depends altogether "upon the light in which he may be by the knowledges that are with him," is very clearly stated in the following passage:—

(63.) "The doctrine which ought to serve man as a lamp, that he may know the Divine Truths of the Word, in the sense of the letter—is taught by the internal sense, and thus it is the internal sense itself. This is *in a certain way* open to every one who is in an external from the internal, *i.e.* whose internal man is opened, even though he should not know what the internal sense is. For heaven, which is in the internal sense of the Word, flows in with that man when he reads the Word; it illustrates him and gives him perception, and thus it teaches him. Yea, if you are willing to believe it, man's internal man is in the internal sense of its own accord; for it is a heaven in the least form, and it is with the angels in heaven when it is open, wherefore it is also with them in a like perception. This may appear from the consideration that the interior intellectual ideas of a man are not of the same quality as his natural ideas, although they correspond to them. Their quality remains unknown to a man during his life in the body, but he comes spontaneously into them when he enters into the other life, because they are inherent in him, and by them he is at once in the consort of angels. It hence appears that a man whose internal is opened is in the internal sense of the Word, although he is not aware of it. Hence he has illustration when he reads the Word, but this illustration is *according to the light in which he may be by the knowledges that are with him*" (A. C. 10,400).

This is a most important passage, for it affirms in the first place that the illustration in which a man may be, although it depends internally upon his state of good, yet is qualified outwardly by "the knowledges that are with him"—that, therefore, if any man would

enjoy the same state of illustration as Swedenborg, he must not only be in the same degree of good in which he was, but he must also possess the same amount of knowledges; and by knowledges are here meant knowledges from the Word of God, and also such knowledges as were acquired by Swedenborg by the opening of his spiritual sight. And in the second place we learn, that although the internal sense is open to every one who is "in an external from the internal," *i.e.* to every one who is regenerated, he yet remains unacquainted with the quality of the internal sense "during his life in the body," while "he comes spontaneously into this knowledge when he enters into the other life." In the natural world "he has illustration while reading the Word," but this illustration is only most general as long as his understanding is encompassed with, and bound down to, the natural body; but as soon as his understanding is released from the prison of the material body, and as soon as it is freed from the trammels of space and time, he comes spontaneously into a knowledge of the "*quality*" of the internal sense, and is thus able to describe it.

We see, therefore, that in order to describe the quality of the internal sense, *i.e.* in order to describe not only the generals, but also the particulars, of the internal sense, it is not sufficient to be in a state of good by regeneration, and to have an understanding most richly stored with knowledges, but it is also necessary that the intellectual faculty should be severed from the bonds of space and time, that the man therefore should have the sight of his spirit

opened, and that as to his intellectual nature he should be in consort with angels.

Suppose, therefore, that a man in this world were able to come into the same state as to good, and into the same state as to knowledges in which Swedenborg was, yet if as to his intellectual faculty he was not separated from the body in the same manner as Swedenborg was, he would not be able to see the particulars, but only the generals of the internal sense of Scripture; he would, therefore, not be able to describe the doctrines of the internal sense as to their quality, and hence would not be able to supplement any imaginary deficiencies of the doctrine of the internal sense.

If, however, it be insisted upon that every man is able to have his spiritual sight opened, we answer that Swedenborg himself declares in No. 55 that this gift in his own case was exceptional, that it was not enjoyed by "the men of the golden age," and that "it has not been granted to any one since the creation."

We see, therefore, that the state and the degree of Swedenborg's illustration, or of his inspiration, did not depend upon the state of his will or of his good alone, nor upon the state of his rational understanding, or upon that of his knowledges alone; nor even upon the regeneration of his will, combined with a most thorough development of his rational understanding by a proper insemination of knowledges—for even this state, although indispensable to Swedenborg, he might yet have had in common with other members of the Church, who might possibly have passed through a like state of instruction and study, and have reached

an equally exalted state of regeneration—but the distinctive feature of his inspiration consisted in the fact of his having been separated as to his intellectual part from his natural body, and of having been thereby enabled to see the Divine Truth from the Lord in the same light in which it is received and perceived by the angels of the highest heaven.

As the important bearing of the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight upon his capacity "of receiving the doctrines of the New Church in his understanding" (*T. C. R.* 779) is usually not taken properly into account by the members of the New Church, and as it is even thought by some that the condition upon which his illumination rested was not of an internal, but of an external, nature, and that "the times at which his special illumination was granted were *only* while he was devoutly 'reading the Word,'"¹ it will be necessary to consider this subject at greater length.

The first use of the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight, as we have already seen, was to provide in his understanding the necessary vessels or knowledges for the reception of the doctrines of the internal sense, *i.e.* of the Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord as this exists in the heavens. That Swedenborg, by his experience in the other world, was able to receive this Divine Truth, and thus the doctrine of the internal sense, in his rational mind, and thereby to obtain a rational understanding of the same, is plainly stated by him in the following passage:—

¹ Minutes of the Conference of the New Church, 1873, p. 49.

(64.) “*Many of the interior things of the Word of God-Messiah cannot be learned from the experience of this human race, but have to be learned from the ancients and from spirits.*”

“There are many things in the Word of God-Messiah, as well in the Old as in the New Testaments, which cannot but be unintelligible; the reason however is, that the human race living at the present day is altogether changed compared with those that lived in the Ancient, and after that in the primitive Christian, Church. If they had lived in those times, they might have known it very well from experience and from revelation in themselves; yet it may be known still better from the state of the spirits and the human souls that now fill the lowest sphere of heaven. This also is the reason why I am permitted to adduce from them experiences of things altogether obliterated now-a-days, and thus to supply this state of ignorance” (*S. D.* 200).

The use, however, of these experiences, or of the knowledges concerning the other world, which Swedenborg was enabled to collect by the opening of his spiritual sight, was not only to enable *him* “to receive the doctrines of the internal sense in his understanding,” but also to enable *us*, his readers, to obtain a rational understanding of these doctrines. This we read in what follows :—

(65.) “Since by the Lord’s Divine Mercy it was given me to know the internal sense of the Word, and as in that sense are contained things of a most hidden nature which have never before come to any one’s knowledge, and which can never be known unless the nature of the things in the other world be made known, because so very many of the things contained in the internal sense have respect thereto, and describe and involve them; therefore I am permitted to disclose those things which I have now heard and seen for several years, during which time I was allowed to be present with spirits and angels” (*A. C.* 67).

The chief reason, however, why Swedenborg’s intellectual nature was separated from his natural body, and why the Lord opened his spiritual sight, or the sight of his internal understanding, was that he might

see and describe the particulars of the internal sense as these are seen and understood by the angels of heaven, and so be removed out of the ultimate sensual light in which the doctrines of the internal sense appear to men upon earth (compare No. 54). This is principally stated by Swedenborg in the following passage:—

(66.) “The internal or spiritual sense, and the arcana of the state of the Church in the heavens and on the earths, which are contained in that sense, cannot be revealed to any one unless he know that sense, and unless it be granted to him at the same time *to have consort with the angels, and to speak spiritually with them*” (L. J. 42).

Yet it was not the mere fact of his understanding, by its coherence with the body, being confined to the general principles of the natural world which prevented him from perceiving the doctrines of the internal sense; for these doctrines might have appeared to him in some general light if he had enjoyed the same advantages as are enjoyed by the members of the New Church in the possession of his writings, or if his mental constitution had been the same as that of the men of the Most Ancient Church (see *A. C.* 4493), although with them also their intellectual nature was not separated from the natural body, and they were able to see Divine Truth only in the general light of the natural world, and not in the particular light of the spiritual world (see No. 55). As an additional reason why it was necessary for Swedenborg to be separated from his body as to his understanding, he says:—

(67.) “In order that the true Christian religion might be manifested, it was absolutely necessary that some one should be introduced into the spiritual world, and derive from the Lord’s mouth genuine truths from the Word; for to do this from the false churches which exist at the

present day, where it is impossible to see a single genuine truth from the Word, except such as is encompassed with, and steeped in, falsities, and coheres with falsities, would be like attempting to sail to the Pleiades, or like undertaking to dig out the gold which is in the centre of the earth" (*Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*, No. 38).

Swedenborg therefore had his spiritual sight opened, and was permitted by the Lord to associate with spirits and angels in order to escape the perverse teachings of the churches upon earth; wherefore also it is strictly true that the doctrines of the New Church were brought down by Swedenborg from heaven to earth, or as it is stated in the Book of Revelation (xxi. 2), "*I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.*" Still, as the internal sense is the Word of God as it exists among the angels of heaven, it was even necessary that in order to bring down out of heaven the doctrines of the internal sense, Swedenborg should see these doctrines in the very same light in which they are perceived by the angels; wherefore we read in No 53 that Swedenborg "was introduced into the spiritual world," and that "there, by immediate light from the Lord, he was illustrated in such things as constitute the interiors of the Church;" this he corroborates in what follows:—

(68.) "In order to teach the way to heaven, and likewise the truths of the Church from the Word, the Lord was pleased to prepare me from my earliest youth for the perception of the Word. He introduced me into the spiritual world, and *illuminated me with the light of His Word more proximately*" (*Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*, No. 55).

Swedenborg's "preparation from his earliest youth for the perception of the Word," consisted no doubt

in the regeneration of his will, and in the development of his rational mind by the study of the letter of the Word, and the natural sciences in general; yet he underwent also a certain preparation for that separation of his intellectual faculty from the natural body by which he was to be enabled to continue in consort with spirits and angels. This preparation is described by him in the following passage, where, after first enumerating the various kinds of respiration which prevail in the world of spirits and in heaven, he continues:—

(69.) “I was first accustomed to this respiration in infancy while saying my morning and evening prayers, and also sometimes afterwards while exploring the concordant action of the heart and lungs, and especially while writing from my mind those things that have been published. I then noticed for several years that there is a tacit respiration which is scarcely perceptible; about this also it was granted to me afterwards to think and speak. In this wise I was introduced from my infancy into such respirations, especially by intense speculations in which respiration is quiescent: for otherwise no intense speculation as to the truth can exist; and afterwards also when heaven was opened to me, so that I could speak with spirits, I was so entirely introduced into this respiration that for the space of almost an hour I did not draw in any breath; there was only so much air drawn in that I was able to think. In this manner I was introduced by the Lord into interior respirations. Perhaps also in my dreams, for I noticed again and again that after falling asleep respiration was almost entirely withdrawn from me, so that on awakening I gasped for breath. This kind of respiration, however, ceases when I do not observe, write, or think any such thing, and reflect only upon this that I believe these facts, and that they take place in innumerable ways. Formerly I was not able to see these varieties, because I could not reflect upon them: yet now I am able to do so, because each state, each sphere, and also each society, especially the interior ones, have in me a suitable respiration, into which I fall without reflecting upon it. By this means it is also granted to me to be present with spirits and angels” (*S. D.* 3464).

We see, therefore, that every faculty in Swedenborg, his will, his understanding, and his very body, had to be prepared by the Lord from his earliest childhood, so that in after years "the Lord could fill him with His spirit and enable him to teach the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from Him" (*T. C. R.* 779).

As the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight depended upon the separation of his intellectual faculty from his natural body; and as his understanding could only be gradually emancipated from the limitations of the body, and be accustomed to breathe in the atmosphere of heaven, and to see in the light of the angels, therefore also different stages in the opening of his spiritual sight are recorded by Swedenborg himself. The first decided separation of his intellectual faculty from the body, and thus the first period when he had spiritual manifestations, was 1743.¹ In 1744 he began to recognise the approach

¹ The spiritual manifestations which were experienced by Swedenborg before the interiors of his mind were so far opened that he could converse with spirits, are described by him in the following passage:—"Before my mind was opened, so that I could converse with spirits, and thus be persuaded by living experience, there existed with me, for several years, such evidences, that I wonder now why I could not be persuaded then of the Lord's government by means of spirits: for I had not only dreams during several years, by which I was informed of the things which I wrote; but I experienced also changes of state while writing, and there was a certain extraordinary light in the things written. Afterwards I had many visions with closed eyes, and light was given to me in a miraculous manner; there was also an influx from spirits in a sensible manner, and the sensation was, indeed, as manifest as if it had been received by the bodily senses; often there were infestations in various manners by evil spirits when I was in temptations, and

and departure of spirits and the nature of their influx ;¹ but it was only in 1745 that this separation was so far accomplished that he was actually admitted to an habitual intercourse with angels and spirits, while not until 1747 that final change took place in him concerning which he himself says that "there had been a change of state in him into the celestial kingdom *in an image*." That the separation of the internals of his understanding from his body, and hence his elevation into the light of heaven, was gradual, he clearly states in what follows :—

(70.) "I was elevated into the light of heaven interiorly by degrees, and in proportion as I was elevated my understanding was elevated, so that I was finally enabled to perceive things which at first I did not perceive, and, finally, such things as it had been impossible for me to comprehend" (*H. H.* 130).

As there were such marked degrees in the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight, the date of this opening

afterwards, when writing anything that the spirits did not like, I was almost possessed by them so as to cause a shudder. I heard also some one talking early in the morning, besides many other things, until at last a spirit addressed me in a few words, when I was very much astonished at his perceiving my thoughts. I was astonished afterwards in a like manner when my mind was opened so that I could converse with spirits ; and the spirits themselves were surprised when they witnessed my astonishment : for so difficult is it for man to believe that he is governed by the Lord by means of spirits, and so difficult is it for him to give up the belief, that he lives his own life without any mediation of spirits" (*S. D.* 2951).

¹ On the 31st of August, 1747, Swedenborg wrote in his *Spiritual Diary*: "For nearly three years [about the middle of 1744] I was allowed to perceive and notice the operations of spirits, not by a sort of internal sight, but by a sensation which is associated with a sort of obscure sight, whereby I noticed their presence, which was various, their approach and departure, besides many other things" (*S. D.* 192).

would differ accordingly as the first or the more advanced stages of it are taken into consideration. Swedenborg himself, up to the year 1753, declared uniformly in favour of the year 1745,¹ from 1753 to 1767 he just as uniformly was in favour of the year 1744.²

¹ Cf. *Adversaria*, I., 943, 1003; II., 87, 135, 1285, 1684, 1957; III., 1129, 3102; IV., 4682, 7572; *Spiritual Diary*, Nos. 821, 1166, 1974, 2099, 2739, 3058, 4228.

² (a.) In the *Spiritual Diary*, No. 4618, we read: "From eight to nine years I was in constant consort with spirits and angels." No. 4573 was written on August 6, 1752, so that No. 4618 must have been written very soon after, either in 1752 or 1753, which would give the year 1744.

(b.) In *A. C.* 6200 (contained in vol. v., published in 1753) it is stated: "Continuously for nine years I was in the consort of spirits and angels." As this passage occurs in the latter part of the volume, it may be supposed to have been written in the year in which it was printed, which would give 1744.

(c.) *H. H.* 1: "For thirteen years it was granted to me to speak with the angels." As the last volume of the *Arcana* had been finished in 1756, this work was undoubtedly written by Swedenborg in the year 1757, although published only in 1758, which gives 1744.

(d.) *E. U.* 1: "It was granted to me for twelve years to converse daily with spirits." This work is a reprint of the memorable relations published by Swedenborg in the *Arcana Cælestia* from 1753 to 1756, from which work it was, no doubt, compiled by Swedenborg in 1756, although it was not published by him until 1758, which again yields 1744.

(e.) *D. W.* (*A. E.*) vii. 2 contains the following corroborating passage:—"I had daily intercourse with angels and departed men from the year 1744." There can be no doubt whatever about the genuineness of this figure, as this may be verified by reference to the photo-lithographic copy of this treatise in vol. viii. of the Swedenborg MSS. p. 42, line 5 from the bottom of the page.

(f.) *D. L. W.* 355: "I have perceived the influx from the spiritual world in a perceptible and sensible manner for nineteen years continually." This passage is contained at the close of Part IV., and therefore may be supposed to have been written in the same year when published, viz., 1763, which would give us the year 1744.

and from 1767 to the time of his death he pronounced in favour of the year 1743.¹

As Swedenborg in proportion to his increase in spiritual light antedated the opening of his spiritual

(g.) *Con. L. J.* 35 : "The Lord has been pleased to open the eyes of my spirit, and to keep them open for nineteen years." There is no doubt that this little work was written by Swedenborg in the same year in which it was published, viz., 1763, which would give us the year 1744.

(h.) In the year 1765 Swedenborg declared to the Royal Librarian, C. C. Gjörwell, that "the Lord had appeared to him in May 1744, while he was in London."

(i.) In his letter to Prelate Œtinger, dated Nov. 11, 1766, Swedenborg says : "I have been speaking with the angels for twenty-two years," and afterwards adds, "Heaven has been opened to me since 1744."

¹ (a.) *C. L.* 1 : "The Lord has opened the interiors of my mind now for twenty-five years." (b.) *C. L.* 419 : "I observed the influx from the spiritual world in a perceptible and sensible manner continuously for twenty-five years." If we take the year of the publication of this work, viz., 1767, we obtain the year 1743.

(c.) In his letter to the Rev. T. Hartley, which was written in 1769, and published by Mr. Hartley in 1770, Swedenborg states that "the Lord appeared before him in 1743."

(d.) In his letter to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, written in 1771, Swedenborg says : "The Lord manifested Himself in person before me, and sent me to fill this office in 1743."

(e.) *T. C. R.* 157 : "I have been in the spirit, and at the same time in the body, for twenty-six years." (f.) *T. C. R.* 851, "The interiors of my mind have been opened now for twenty-seven years." As Swedenborg states (*T. C. R.* 791) that this work was finished on June 19, 1770, it follows that the earlier portion of this work was written in 1769, and the later in 1770, which, in both cases, gives us the year 1743.

(g.) As early as 1776 some of the believers in the doctrines of the New Church doubted whether 1743 was the proper date of the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight, and C. F. Nordensköld wrote to Dr. Beyer to ask him whether that number was not written by a slip of the pen. Dr. Beyer answered in a letter, dated March 23, 1776, "There is no slip of the pen in the year 1743, but it agrees with all the dates given in the books."

sight, it seems but fit and proper that we should accept his final judgment in this matter, and declare likewise in favour of the year 1743; with the understanding, however, that the opening of his spiritual sight was progressive, that there was a distinct step made by him in 1744, another in 1745, and still another in 1747, from which period he dates the publication of his theological writings in the only printed list which he published of these writings (see *C. L.* 328).

Let us now investigate more minutely the effect which the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight or the separation of his intellectual faculty from his body had upon the quality of his perception.

No. 43 describes the "revelation from perception" which was enjoyed "by the men of the most ancient Church, by a few of the ancient, but scarcely by any one at the present day;" this "revelation from perception," which is internal and not external, as we have proved, Swedenborg enjoyed by virtue of his regeneration, and by virtue of the thorough storing of his mind with knowledges from the Word, and with knowledges obtained by a study of the natural sciences.

This perception was intrinsically the state of his perception before the opening of the spiritual sight was added to it; yet he was unable even then to come into the full enjoyment of this perception, because he lacked the necessary knowledges of true doctrine from the Word (see No. 66).

The first effect of the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight on the nature of his perception was,

therefore, to supply to his rational mind the needful knowledges of the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word (see Nos. 64, 65); and the next effect was that he was able to recognize the source of the influx whence he obtained his perception; and herein his perception differed from that of every other human being.

That this faculty was possessed by Swedenborg appears plainly from Nos. 50 and 51, and also from the following passages:—

(71.) “It was granted to me to perceive when I was in my own, or in my *proprium*, and when I was not in my own; and while I was in my own, I was good for nothing; wherefore I was removed from it by the Lord as much as possible” (*S. D.* 5464).

(72.) “I think interiorly, and perceive what flows into my exterior thought, whether it is from heaven or from hell; the latter I reject, and the former I receive; and yet it appears to me as if I thought and willed from myself” (*D. P.* 290).

The kind of perception which Swedenborg enjoyed is also described by him in what follows:—

(73.) “Those to whom the Lord has granted perception are able to know who in a society, and who outside of a society, flow into their thoughts and into their speech; and, indeed, in a most exquisite manner, by the good pleasure of the Lord” (*S. D.* 2100).

(74.) Those who are led by the Lord have a certain interior perception or intuition in respect to those things which are to be done, especially during the act of doing; which perception is so manifest with those who are led by the Lord, that it is given to them to perceive, which things happen from the Lord's good pleasure, which from His leave, and which from permission; and these things are most distinct from one another, and their distinct perception is also granted; but all this can only be comprehended by a man who is in a like state, the rest neither understand nor believe it, however it is described with all attending circumstances” (*S. D.* 892).

It must not be thought, however, that, because Swedenborg, as to his intellectual faculty, was sepa-

rated from the body, and was thereby able to be present in the various heavens and converse with the angels, his thought was entirely removed from the plane of existence of the men upon earth, and that therefore he thought and spoke altogether in an angelic and no longer in a human manner. This was not the case. Swedenborg continued in his former human condition. He thought and willed like other human beings; but to his external human plane of thought there was added an internal which he had in common with the angels of heaven, and which enabled him to be as to his spirit with angels of the celestial heaven, and to think and breathe with them; and it was this internal plane of thought by which he was illuminated by the Lord and received his revelations. Such an internal plane of thought is developed more or less with all men who are regenerated by the Lord, but they are not conscious of it; and it expresses itself only in that most general way which is described in Nos. 46 and 47, and the reason of this is, that this internal plane of thought is not separated with them from the body or the natural mind, but is even attached to it, and encompassed with it as to all its particulars. But with Swedenborg this internal plane of thought was separated from the body, and hence from the natural mind; and, as it was thus separated, he was able to become most thoroughly conscious of it. On that account he says in No. 72, "I think interiorly, and perceive what flows into my exterior thought, whether it is from heaven or from hell."

This double plane of thought which existed in

Swedenborg is most minutely described by him in the following passages :—

(75.) “I am gifted with a double thought ; one which is interior, and another which is more exterior. Wherefore, whenever I am in consort with evil spirits, I can still be in consort with the good at the same time, and thus perceive of what nature the spirits are who desire to rule over me ; and this happens so often that I have grown quite familiar with it. If I did not know that I was in company with evil spirits, and that it is the spirits who think thus, and affect me, I should not know otherwise, but that it is I who am of such a nature, and who meditate such things” (*S. D.* 484).

Again he says concerning this double thought :—

(76.) “I spoke with the spirits concerning internal thought, and, that I might know its nature, external thought was taken away from me, so that I thought nothing from objects [*i.e.* from the things before the eyes] ; and although I scarcely thought of anything in reality, I still heard in this state what they said, but without reflecting upon it. It was brought to my recollection that I had been once for a long time in such a state, *i.e.* in interior thought, while thinking of my writings in the street, at table, and sometimes when in conversation with others, in which state I noticed nothing [around me]. Afterwards this double thought was manifestly perceived by me, and was exhibited before me, viz., an interior thought concerning such things as were submitted to the understanding, and as belonged to the objects of the senses ; as, for instance, upon reading the Word of God, I noticed this double thought manifestly and for a long time ; and likewise in the state in which I am now while writing, and most frequently while I am reading, when I hear the spirits speaking with me ; at such times this interior thought has been plainly noticed by me ; it was also observed by the spirits. He who has an interior thought has also an exterior thought” (*S. D.* 2900).

In this interior thought the Lord was constantly present with Swedenborg, and He thence dictated to him what to write, what to speak, and what to do ; on this account also Swedenborg stated in his *Spiritual*

Diary, No. 1647, "What I have learned from representations, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels, is from the Lord alone." The whole of this interesting passage is as follows:—

(77.) "Whenever any representation, vision, or conversation took place, I was kept interiorly, and more interiorly in reflection about these things; what was their use, what good flowed thence, and hence what I was to learn from them. No attention was paid to this reflection of mine by those who caused these representations and visions, and who spoke; but sometimes they were indignant when they perceived that I reflected. *I was therefore instructed by no spirit, and by no angel, but by the Lord alone*, from whom is everything good and true. Even when they wished to instruct me in many things there was scarcely anything but what was false; wherefore I was forbidden to believe anything spoken by them, nor were they allowed to inject anything that was their own. Besides, when they desired to use persuasion I perceived from an interior and a more interior persuasion that a thing was so, and not as they wished to make me believe, at which they also wondered. This perception was very manifest, but it cannot be described to man's apprehension" (*S. D.* 1647).

In referring to this passage in his *Index* (*Reflectere*, 1647), Swedenborg says, "There was interior reflection or perception given me by the Lord when I spoke with spirits, and when I saw representations."

We see, therefore, that Swedenborg enjoyed this double thought not only "while reading the Word of God" (see No. 76), but also "when he spoke with spirits, and when he saw representations;" and we see, further, that Swedenborg "was instructed by the Lord alone," not only "while reading the Word of God," but also while storing up in his mind "the things heard and seen in the spiritual world." As the Lord was thus constantly present with Swedenborg in his interior thought, and as He flowed into this thought with the Divine Truth proceeding *immediately*

from His Divine Humanity ; and as Swedenborg was conscious of the Lord's presence and of His influx, he declares (see No. 50), "It was given me to perceive distinctly what came from the Lord, and what from angels—*what came from the Lord I wrote down, but what came from the angels I did not write down.*"

In order to show that this passage does not refer to a special case, but that Swedenborg describes here the ordinary state of perception with which he was gifted by the Lord, we propose to give this passage in full :—

(78.) "They who are in the spiritual affection of truth are elevated into the light of heaven, even so as to perceive their illustration from the Lord. It was given me to see this illustration and to perceive from this illustration distinctly what comes from the Lord, and what from the angels ; *what came from the Lord was written, and what came from the angels was not written.* It was given to me besides to speak with angels as one man with another man, and also to see those things which are in the heavens, and those which are in the hells. The reason of this is that the end of the present Church has come, and a new church is about to come which will be the New Jerusalem, to which it is to be revealed that the Lord rules the universe,—heaven, as well as the world ; that there is a heaven and a hell, and their quality ; that men live also as men after death—those who have been led by the Lord in heaven, and those who have been led by themselves in hell ; that the Word is the Divine itself of the Lord on earth, and also that the last judgment has taken place, lest man expect this to eternity in his own world ; besides many other things which belong to the light which now rises after the darkness" (*A. E.* 1183).

The great difficulty in obtaining a rational view of Swedenborg's inspiration consists in reconciling the freedom and rationality which he evidently enjoyed, with the fact of his writing in his works only the Lord's words and not his own. Yet by following up intelli-

gently the subject of his double thought, we shall be able to obtain the requisite rational instruction.

In a passage to which Dr. Beyer likewise refers us (see his Index, vol. i. p. 466), in pointing out the special perception which was enjoyed by Swedenborg, we read as follows :—

(79.) “To which provinces angelic societies belong, may be known in the other life from their situation, in respect to the human body, and also from their operation and their influx, for they flow in and operate upon that organ, and upon that member in which they are. Still their influx and operation can be perceived only by those who are in the other life, and not by man ; and only by him whose interiors have been so far opened ; and even then it cannot be perceived by him unless the Lord grants him *sensitive reflection* [*i.e.* reflection on what enters by the senses] *to which perception is adjoined*” (A. C. 5171).

This “sensitive reflection,” or this reflection on the things which enter into the external thought by the external senses, depended upon the use of Swedenborg’s own freedom and rationality ; but the “perception which was adjoined” to this reflection was caused by the Lord’s immediate influx into Swedenborg’s internal thought. This perception came from the Lord alone, and was beyond the control of Swedenborg’s freedom and rationality, wherefore we also read that it was *adjoined* to his state of reflection.

The extent to which Swedenborg was governed, as to his freedom and rationality, by the Lord’s influx into his internal thought, and the manner in which this influx was perceived by him, he describes in the following passage :—

(80.) “As those who are led by the Lord perceive what they ought to do, and indeed in a manner not intelligible by others ; so also they

are persuaded of what they ought to know, likewise in a spiritual manner, not intelligible to others. When, therefore, things probable in the highest degree occur, so that there is scarcely anything that contradicts, but, on the contrary, every thing affirms, even then they are not persuaded of these things before the spiritual persuasion, which is of faith, is also present" (*S. D.* 1405).

So also Swedenborg, who was most anxious to be led by the Lord alone and not by himself, never wrote anything, on any point of doctrine, from the state of his own reflection, or from the state of his external thought, and hence from the findings of his own reason, even though those things should have been "probable in the highest degree," and even though "there was scarcely anything that contradicted, but everything on the contrary that affirmed those things." Before writing down anything that concerned the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, or the doctrines of the internal sense, he always waited first for the Lord's voice that came to him by an influx into his interior thought.

Yet not only Swedenborg's internal, but also his external thought, or that thought upon which he exercised his own reflection, or his faculties of freedom and rationality, was governed by the Lord, and it was governed by the Lord by His mediate influx through the Grand Man of heaven in general, and the angels and spirits composing the Grand Man in particular; so that even the action of Swedenborg's freedom and rationality was completely controlled by the Lord. On the subject of the Lord's general influx through the Grand Man of heaven into Swedenborg, he said in 1748:—

(81.) "For three years I perceive now in a sensible manner that I have been kept in the sphere of faith, yet so that it seems to me as if I think and act from myself" (*S. D.* 2739).

The action of this sphere of faith upon him Swedenborg describes as follows :—

(82.) "The universal heaven and earth, both in general and in particular, are governed by a sphere proceeding from the Lord. . . . Whenever I speak in this sphere, or when I think in it, as I do now while I am writing, each and everything is in conformity with the action of this sphere, and nothing can be said, thought, or written, not even the least iota, but what is in conformity with this sphere" (*S. D.* 1844, 1845).

(83.) "From frequent and daily experience it has been granted to me now for three years to know that both men and spirits are compelled to think and speak as the Lord permits or grants, for whether I was willing or not, I had to think and speak [in a certain manner]. Spirits also are compelled to speak contrary to what they think; nor is it possible for them to resist, for they are brought into the society of others, and thus are carried away, as it were, by a stream of thought or speech" (*S. D.* 2099).

The nature of the stream by which Swedenborg's thoughts were led is described in No. 51, thus: "That which flowed in from the Lord led every series of my thoughts in succession, and although gently, yet so powerfully that I could by no means stray away into other thoughts. I tried to do so, but in vain."

We see, therefore, that there was a general influx brought to bear by the Lord upon Swedenborg, by which the operation of his exterior thought, or the operation of his freedom and rationality, was controlled in such a manner that he thought and spoke, and consequently wrote, as the Lord desired him to think, speak, and write. This was done by the Lord's

mediate influx into Swedenborg's understanding through the Grand Man of heaven in general. Let us now define more minutely the nature of this general influx into Swedenborg.

First, By this influx there was imparted to him the light of reason by which he was enabled to reflect upon the objects that entered into his thought from without. This operation of the general influx of the Lord by heaven is clearly taught in what follows:—

(84.) "The general influx of truth is the illumination which gives the faculty of apperceiving and of understanding the truth. This illumination is from the light of heaven which is from the Lord, which light is nothing else but Divine Truth" (*A. C.* 5668).

Secondly, By this general influx Swedenborg was kept in an affirmative state of mind; and as long as he was in this affirmative state of mind it was his delight to think and act, to speak and write, as the Lord desired him to do; and hence to think and speak in the same manner as the angels of heaven. This effect of the Lord's mediate influx by heaven is taught in Nos. 81, 82, and 83.

The effect of the Lord's mediate influx by heaven in general was, however, in Swedenborg's case, not limited to his understanding; for this influx was conjoined in him with the Lord's immediate influx into his will (see Nos. 44, 48); and one of the effects of the conjunction of these two influxes was, that Swedenborg was kept out of evil by the Lord, *i.e.* out of his *proprium*. That he was in a state of good is ingenuously stated by him in No. 49; but that it was due to his being kept in the sphere of heaven, and

thus within the sphere of the Divine Truth which proceeds mediately from the Lord, is taught by him in what follows :—

(85.) “It was given me to know by experience that the Lord keeps me from the evil by which I am infested ; so that if He should release this hold in the least, I should at once fall into evil, and into the danger of thinking and acting evil. It appears to me, therefore, as if I was kept aloof from the evil which is below, and consequently that I am in an interior sphere when evil is intended by the world of evil spirits. It was given me to know hence how good angelic spirits and angels are kept as it were above or within [*i.e.* in a degree more interior than] evil, so that it is not able to reach them. In this manner also evil spirits are prevented from flowing into man, while he is kept in the knowledges of faith ; of this man himself is ignorant” (*S. D.* 3085).

The Lord’s government of Swedenborg, in respect to the externals of his mind, was however not limited to the direction of his external thought by the influx of the mediate Divine Truth through heaven in general, nor was the Lord’s immediate influx into Swedenborg’s affections, or into his will, confined to removing him from the evils and the *proprium* inherent in his nature, but the Lord by this immediate influx into his affections directed him also in everything that pertained to the special mission or the special office to which he was called by the Lord, as is plainly taught in what follows :—

(86.) “From my past life I was able to see that everything therein was governed by the Lord by means of those things that had been produced or done by me” (*S. D.* 3177).

(87.) “What the acts of my life involved I could not distinguish at the time when they happened, but by the Divine mercy of God-Messiah I was informed with regard to some, and even with respect to many, particulars. From these I was at last able to see that the Divine Providence had governed the acts of my life uninterruptedly from my

very youth, and directed them in such a manner that by means of the knowledges of natural things I was enabled to reach a state of intelligence, and thus by the Divine mercy of God-Messiah to serve as an instrument for opening those things which are hidden interiorly in the Word of God-Messiah. Those things, therefore, are now made manifest which hitherto were not manifest" (*Adv.* ii. 839).

That in these things, *i.e.* in the course of study and investigation which Swedenborg was to pursue, he was not led by a conscious influx or dictate into his thought, but by an unconscious influx into his affections, and that this unconscious influx from the Lord continued even after he had been called to his office, is declared by him in what follows :—

(88.) "I know from my own case that in the parts of my office I am instructed by experience only, without the memory of particulars" (*S. D.* 888).

By which Swedenborg means that in everything that concerns his office, *i.e.* "his teaching of the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from the Lord" (*T. C. R.* 779), he was not directed by his own thought on the things contained in his natural memory, which in the *Spiritual Diary* he calls "the memory of particulars," but was governed by the Lord by an influx into his will, of which he remained unconscious, until it manifested itself by "experience" or by the acts of his life.

By this immediate influx into Swedenborg's affections the Lord also governed the particulars of his thought ; yea, He governed even those things which entered into his thought from without, and hence He ruled also the *particular influx* which Swedenborg received from spirits in the world of spirits, and

from angels in heaven. For Swedenborg was like all other men in receiving influx not only from heaven or the Grand Man *in general*, but also from the spirits and angels *in particular*, with whom he was associated as to his spirit. Swedenborg, however, differed from all other men in this particular, that his internal thought, or the internals of his understanding were separated from his external thought, or from his body, and that by his internal thought, or by the Lord's influx into his internal thought, he was able to see and understand everything that entered into his external thought by the particular influx from angels and spirits. The nature of the particular influx which Swedenborg received from particular angels and spirits is described by him in the following words:—

(89.) “That man is ruled by the Lord by means of angels and spirits, was given to me to know by such manifest experience that not the least doubt remains on that subject. For all my thoughts and all my affections for many years [Swedenborg wrote this in 1753], as to all their least particulars, flowed in by means of spirits and angels. This was granted to me to perceive in such a clear manner that nothing can be clearer; for I perceived, saw, and heard who they were, what was their quality, and whence they were. Whenever anything objectionable entered into my thought or into my will, I spoke with them, and chided them; I noticed also that their power of infusing such things was restrained by the angels, and the manner in which this was done; likewise that they were often driven away. And when they were driven away, others succeeded in their places, from whom again influx took place. It was then granted to me to notice whence these spirits were, and of what societies they were the subjects; I was also frequently allowed to talk to these societies themselves. And although everything of the thoughts and affections as to their least particulars flowed in by spirits and angels, I still thought exactly as before, I willed as before, conversed with men as before, so that no difference

was observed by any one between my former and my present life. I know that scarcely any one will believe this, but still it is an eternal truth" (*A. C.* 6191).

The nature of the particular influx into Swedenborg is further described by him in what follows:—

(90.) "By a manifest experience which extends over several years, I know it as a most certain fact that the thoughts of a man who is in faith are not his; that when they are evil they are of evil spirits, who suppose that they think from themselves, wherefore they are also imputed to them, as they are to the men who believe thus; while, when they are good, they are the Lord's only. This was granted to me to know as a most certain thing by daily experience and reflection.

"When at last I became accustomed to this, that I did not think anything from myself, it was even delightful for me to think thus; for I was thus enabled to speak of those things which were introduced into my thoughts, and that I myself was free from wicked thoughts; it was even granted to me to know which spirits they were, and whence they came, who instilled those wicked thoughts, and I also frequently spoke with them about it. Even the least particular of thought I was permitted to know from whom it was, and whence it came; so that these reflections became delightful to me.

"But the spirits themselves who instilled these wicked thoughts imagined that thus I did not think anything, on which subject I frequently conversed with them; wherefore also they did not desire to be like me: for they thought that thus they would lose every thing of their own, and would be nothing; of which they are afraid, and to which they are averse, when yet it is altogether different" (*S. D.* 1910-1912).

We see, therefore, that although Swedenborg was governed by the Lord, not only by general, but also by particular, influx, he still continued to enjoy his freedom and rationality, and it seemed to him as if he thought and acted from himself, although he was perfectly well aware that all his thoughts came from spirits, and that every least particular of his thoughts

was ruled and directed by the Lord. The most explicit statement on this subject Swedenborg makes in the following passage :—

(91.) “When it was first granted to me by the Lord to speak with spirits and angels, the following arcanum was at once declared to me : I was told from heaven that I was to suppose like others that I thought and willed from myself ; when yet there is nothing from myself : for when it is good it is from the Lord, and when evil from hell. That such is the case was represented to me to the life by various thoughts and affections which were induced upon me by others, and afterwards it was granted to me to perceive and feel that such was the case. Whenever, afterwards, anything evil arose in my will, or anything false in my thoughts, I inquired whence it was, and it was also discovered to me. I was even allowed to converse with them [*i.e.* with the spirits], to call them to account, and to compel them to retreat from me, and to remove their evil and falsity, and keep it with themselves, and no longer to inject them into my thoughts. This happened thousands of times, and in this state I have now remained for many years, and I still continue in it ; and, nevertheless, it appears to me as if I thought and willed like everybody else, with no difference whatever. Novitiate spirits wonder at the state in which I am ; for it seems to them as if I did not think and will anything from myself, and, consequently, as if I was something empty. But I revealed this arcanum to them, and also that, viz., that I think interiorly, and have a perception with regard to what flows into my exterior thought, whether it comes from heaven or from hell, and that I reject the latter and receive the former, and that, nevertheless, it seems to me, as well as to them, as if I thought and willed from myself” (*D. P.* 290).

It is difficult for us to believe that Swedenborg enjoyed his freedom and rationality, notwithstanding his having been, not only as to his internal, but also as to his external thoughts, directed by the Lord ; this difficulty, however, vanishes when we have correct ideas of the nature of man’s freedom and rationality before and after regeneration ; for Swedenborg, in composing his theological writings, was not in the

ordinary state of freedom and rationality in which men are before they are regenerated, but he was in the states of freedom itself and rationality itself which are enjoyed by men after they are regenerated, and also by the angels of heaven. In these states man no longer desires to rule himself, but is anxious to be led by the Lord alone ; moreover, he no longer desires to investigate the truth from himself, but he hopes and aspires to be instructed and illustrated by the Lord in the truth. That there is such a difference between the ordinary state of freedom and rationality, and freedom itself and rationality itself, is plainly taught in what follows :—

(92.) “ To act from freedom according to reason, or from liberty and rationality, is the same thing as acting from the will and the understanding. But it is quite a different thing to act from freedom according to reason, or from liberty and rationality, and to act from freedom *itself* and rationality *itself* ; for a man who does evil from the love of evil, and confirms this with himself, acts indeed from freedom according to reason, but still his freedom is not freedom in itself, or freedom itself, but it is infernal freedom, which in itself is bondage or slavery ; and his reason is not reason in itself, but it is either spurious or false reason, or that which appears as reason by confirmations. . . . Only they who have suffered themselves to be regenerated by the Lord, act from freedom itself according to reason itself ; but the rest act from freedom according to their thought, which with them has the appearance of reason ” (*D. P.* 97, 98).

An answer is here furnished to those who, in believing that Swedenborg in conveying the doctrines of the New Church to mankind was inspired by the Lord, experience a difficulty on this ground, that in writing the works containing these doctrines he was evidently not debarred from the use of his freedom and rationality ; for inspiration from the Lord, *i.e.*

writing the Lord's truth from the Lord, seems incompatible to them with a continuance of man's freedom and rationality.

There is such an incompatibility between the preservation of man's freedom and rationality, and *external* inspiration, as in the case of those who, like the prophets and evangelists, receive Divine inspiration in their external thought; for when the Lord takes possession of a man's external thought, the man himself cannot continue in the use of his external thought by an application of his own freedom and rationality. But there is no such incompatibility between the retention of man's freedom and rationality and *internal* inspiration, like that which was enjoyed by Swedenborg; for while the Lord had possession of the plane of his internal thought, and hence dictated to him what to think and what to write, Swedenborg himself retained the use of his external thought, and hence he continued to enjoy his freedom and rationality. Swedenborg, therefore, as to his external thought, was in a state of "sensitive reflection," and to this "reflection" of his external thought, "perception" from the Lord by influx into his internal thought was adjoined. Again, there is an incompatibility between inspiration and the use of man's freedom and rationality, as these exist with him before regeneration; for before regeneration, and in the beginning of regeneration, man desires to lead and rule himself by the use of his own freedom, according to his own strength, and he does not acknowledge an interior plane of conscience and perception, whence the Lord seeks to direct his

thoughts and actions ; such a thought also distresses and harasses him then. But there is no such incompatibility between inspiration, and freedom itself and rationality itself, as these exist with the angels in heaven, and with men after regeneration ; for they love to be directed by the Lord in everything, and the thought of leading and ruling themselves from their own *proprium* distresses them.

Still, as it is difficult for us to realize such a state from our own thought, it will be necessary to confirm this truth by additional quotations from the writings of the Church :—

(93.) “Souls and spirits cannot perceive in the least that man may perceive and be persuaded from the Lord in what he ought to think, to speak, and to act ; for they think that no other perceptions can exist than such as take their origin from man’s own, or from his *proprium*, so that even those who were more sharp-sighted and more talented in the life of the body, and also in the life afterwards, and who seem to themselves to be able to penetrate and to understand all and everything, are altogether unwilling to acknowledge the existence of such a perception. Whenever this perception or this persuasion formed the topic of conversation, they could not conceive otherwise than that their own or their self (*proprium seu suum*) was absent, and that they no longer existed, but that it was another who thought, spoke, and acted, they being but a kind of organ in which there was no life, or like some sort of wooden machine ; for they cannot conceive of the existence of any other life than that which is their own, or which belongs to them, and, when this is taken away, it seems to them as if they are nothing living, or, as some one observed just now, as if they are something so stupid that it could never be either a soul or a spirit.

“Although these souls and these spirits are clear in other things, and capable of perceiving [them as they are], yet in this [*i.e.* in the matter of perception from the Lord] they are so perverse that they are not merely in a state of doubt, but even of denial, and this, as was said above, for this reason, that when their own or their self is removed, they think that nothing is left but what they reject. Whereupon I told them that there is the same difference between the life of those who do

not enjoy this perception and those who do, as there is between darkness which is so dark that nothing is visible and heaven, or as there is between darkness and light, and even as there is between what rises from the lowest portions in man and his bowels and what descends from the universal heaven.

"For there are two ways to the human understanding, viz., a way by the senses, which is the lower way, and by which the human understanding has its birth; and there is a way by heaven from the Lord, which is the higher way. Whatever is born by the lower way is bodily and material, but what is born by the higher way is spiritual and celestial. Unless this higher door be opened by the Lord, it can never be believed that such a communication exists as causes man to perceive and to be persuaded. But there is, nevertheless, in many persons conscience from this source; but this conscience for the most part is confined to actions, and is formed of a knowledge of those things in which man places worship and duty, and hence it is not true conscience. In some good men and spirits, however, there is an obscure, and in the angels, on the other hand, a clear conscience, so that they know, perceive, and understand, that a thing is so, and that, without such a manifest conscience and persuasion of things, which manifests itself in a variety of ways, no life can exist.

"They wondered exceedingly whenever I told them that I can do nothing from myself, when yet they frequently saw things done or originating from me. When I told them again that these things were not done by me but by means of me, so that it indeed appears to me as if I did them, when yet I do not the least thing from myself, but the Lord does it, then they wondered still more. This struck them as paradoxical, and yet it is a truth which cannot be contradicted, and which is not contradicted by any angel, but confirmed. When they heard the confirmations from heaven they seemed to themselves to believe that it is so, but still they did not believe, because they did not perceive nor understand.

"Such perceptions and persuasions can never be obtained without faith in the Lord; for they are the Lord's, and consequently His gift; and nothing of them belongs either to a man, a soul, a spirit, or an angel" (*S. D.* 897-902).

Here the difficulty of believing in internal inspiration and perception, or in a state of freedom itself and rationality itself, when everything that a man

speaks and acts is from the Lord, and not from himself, is most graphically shown by the examples of some souls or spirits in the other life ; but this same difficulty exists with all those men in this world who do not see the difference between freedom and rationality before, and after, regeneration. On this account we feel constrained to add to the testimony already advanced on this subject the following positive statements :—

(94.) “Some spirits said that I was nothing, because I was moved by others to think, to speak, and to do everything else, and thus that there was nothing from me, which was perceived manifestly by many ; for during four years I have now been such that I neither thought nor spoke from myself (*ex me*), and yet it seems to me sometimes as if it is I who think and speak, but upon inquiry being made those are quickly found who communicated these things.

“This morning I spoke with such spirits, and after they had manifested their surprise I was permitted to tell them that it was well that it was so ; because now when evil is thought and spoken it is not mine, but from the evil spirits, wherefore it is not appropriated to me. But if I should think that evil was from me it would be appropriated to me, and I should thus add actual evil to that in which I had been before. Good, on the other hand, is then from the Lord ; for if I do not attribute merit to myself from thinking, speaking, and doing what is good, then also I do not commit sin (*S. D.* 4228).

From the whole of this it appears that Swedenborg, after he had entered upon his mission, was directed by the Lord not only as to his internal, but also as to his external thought ; that, therefore, all his thoughts and actions, and hence everything that he wrote, was directed and controlled by the Lord ; although, on the other hand, he enjoyed his freedom and rationality like every other human being, yet not that freedom and rationality which is enjoyed by man before

regeneration, but that other higher freedom and rationality which is enjoyed by the angels of heaven, with whom everything of their own, and hence everything of their *proprium*, is separated from their thoughts and affections, and thus from their speech and actions. It is difficult and almost impossible for us to comprehend such a state, yet all those who suffer themselves to be enlightened by spiritual light are able to see rationally the possibility of such a state, and they are therefore prepared to receive affirmatively what our doctrines teach respecting this state. But all those who are able to conceive of a state in which man is separated from his own or from his *proprium*, and in which he thinks and acts from the Lord, and no longer from himself, are also able to understand that Swedenborg, in everything that he wrote concerning the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, could be inspired by the Lord, so that everything that he wrote came from the Lord, and not from himself, and that, nevertheless, he could continue at the same time in the enjoyment of his freedom and rationality, and thus perceive and understand rationally everything that he wrote from the Lord.

We have seen thus far that Swedenborg enjoyed a double thought, an internal and an external, both of which were governed and controlled by the Lord; but we have seen also that, as to his external thought, he continued to enjoy the use of his freedom and rationality. We have seen, further, that the state of Swedenborg's external thought was one of reflection; for Swedenborg was allowed by the Lord to reflect on everything that entered into his mind both by his

bodily and his spiritual senses. To this reflection, perception from the Lord was adjoined by an influx from the Lord into Swedenborg's internal thought; and this influx enabled him to perceive what in his external thought came from himself, from spirits, and from angels, and what from the Lord; what came from the Lord "he wrote down," but what came from himself, from the spirits and angels, "he did not write down" (see our No. 50).

We are now enabled to see clearly that the reception of the doctrines of the internal sense from the Lord into Swedenborg's mind implied two distinct processes, which are pointed out in the following passage:—

(95.) "No one can see what is involved in the Apocalypse in its spiritual sense, except he to whom it is *revealed* out of heaven, and to whom it is, at the same time, given *to know* the internal or spiritual sense" (*L. J.* 41).

A distinction is made here between the *revelation* of the internal sense and the acquisition of its *knowledge*. The knowledge of the internal sense was acquired by Swedenborg by the use of his external thought; but the revelation of the same he received from the Lord immediately in his internal thought. In the acquisition of the *knowledge* of the spiritual sense, Swedenborg acted as of himself, with the full use of his freedom and rationality; but the *revelation* of the spiritual sense to his internal thought he received from the Lord immediately without the medium of his freedom and rationality. Indeed, by this revelation of the internal sense, Swedenborg's reason

was raised into preternatural light, and his will was filled with an irresistible desire of doing the Lord's will only, and not his own.

The acquisition of the *knowledge* of the internal sense in Swedenborg's case consisted in a great measure in the acquisition of the knowledge of correspondences; for this is the means by which the spiritual sense is given (see *T. C. R.* 207). This knowledge Swedenborg acquired partly in the natural, and partly in the spiritual, world. In the natural world he acquired it by a careful study of the letter of the Word, and in the spiritual world by his conversations with the angels who are in that knowledge. On this subject he says in one of his letters to Dr. Beyer:—

(96.) "When heaven was opened to me it was necessary for me first to learn the Hebrew language, as well as *the correspondences* of which the whole Bible is composed, which led me to read the Word of God over many times; and as the Word of God is the source whence all theology must be derived, I was thereby enabled to receive instruction from the Lord who is the Word."

But that the *knowledge* of the internal sense was acquired by Swedenborg also in the spiritual world is clearly shown in what follows:—

(97.) "As the internal or spiritual sense is contained in every word of the Apocalypse, and as that sense contains the arcana of the state of the Church in the heavens and on the earths; and as these cannot be *revealed* to any one unless he *know* that sense, and unless it be granted him at the same time to have consort with the angels, and to *speak spiritually* with them, therefore, lest the things which are written there should remain concealed before men, and be abandoned by them in the

future, on account of their not being understood, the things contained therein have been revealed to me" (*L. J.* 42).

In acquiring the knowledge of the spiritual sense both in the natural and spiritual worlds, Swedenborg was led in a most wonderful manner by the Lord ; and all this knowledge, as soon as it entered into his mind, put off at once everything that was derived from his own or from spirits and angels, and put on the nature of truth from the Lord ; for whenever any knowledge pertaining to the internal sense entered into Swedenborg's external thought, and while he was intent upon following its hidden meaning, light burst in from his internal thought, and a revelation of the internal sense was made to him from the Lord according to this teaching :—

(98.) "Divine Truth, *i.e.* the truth which proceeds immediately from the Lord, because it is purely Divine, flows into the truths of faith of whatsoever kind, and causes them to be true" (*A. C.* 8595). And again, "The knowledges of truth become truths with the regenerate" (*D. F.* 33).

When a knowledge or a doctrine, however, becomes a truth, then it puts off all human qualities and shines in the light of heaven, and thus of the Divine Truth. This process is described in what follows :—

(99.) "With doctrine it is so ; it becomes none in proportion to the presence in it of what is human, *i.e.* of what is sensual, scientific, and rational, from which it is believed to be so. But in proportion to the removal of what is sensual, scientific, and rational, *i.e.* in proportion as doctrine is believed without these, in the same proportion doctrine lives ; for in the same proportion what is Divine flows in. The things which belong to what is human impede influx and reception" (*A. C.* 2538).

The most external vessels for the reception of the doctrines of the internal sense in Swedenborg's mind were the natural truths which he acquired before the opening of his spiritual sight. On this subject he wrote to Prelate Ættinger in 1766:—

(100.) "I was first introduced by the Lord into the *natural sciences*, and thus prepared. This happened from the year 1710 to 1744, when heaven was opened to me; for every one is led by natural to spiritual things. Man, namely, is born natural; he is educated so as to become moral; and finally is generated by the Lord so as to become spiritual. Besides, the Lord granted me to love truths in a spiritual manner, *i.e.* not on account of honour or gain, but on account of the truths themselves; for he who loves truths for the sake of truths, sees them from the Lord, because the Lord is the Way and the Truth (John xiv. 6); but he who loves them on account of honour and gain, sees them from himself; and seeing from one's self is identical with seeing falsities."

By the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight his mind received the capacity of becoming stocked with *spiritual knowledges* or spiritual truths, and thus with genuine vessels for the reception of the doctrines of the internal sense. These knowledges Swedenborg acquired by his intercourse with spirits and angels, and as the Lord Himself had "introduced him into the natural sciences before 1744," so after 1744, when Swedenborg "was introduced into heaven," the Lord Himself also introduced him into a knowledge of spiritual things, or into a knowledge of those things which exist in the spiritual world.

The Lord Himself, therefore, directed and superintended in a most wonderful manner Swedenborg's intercourse with spirits and angels in the other world, permitting him to see and associate with only such

spirits and angels as could furnish him with the particular kind of knowledge of spiritual things which he needed at the time. As his course of instruction in the other world was therefore most carefully watched over and determined by the Lord Himself, we need not wonder that in time Swedenborg's *knowledge* of "things seen and heard in heaven and hell" became so comprehensive and universal, and at the same time so minute and particular, that the Lord could even *reveal* to mankind through Swedenborg, in a rational manner, "the mysteries of heaven, and, at the same time, of man's life after death" (see *H. H.* 1).

The Lord's object, however, in superintending and directing the accumulation of spiritual knowledges in Swedenborg's mind, was not only to prepare and fit him for revealing to mankind "the mysteries of heaven, and, at the same time, of man's life after death," but also through his instrumentality "to open the Word as to its internal sense" (*H. H.* 1); for "the internal sense can never be known unless the nature of the things in the other world be made known, because so very many things contained in the internal sense have respect thereto, and describe and involve them" (see No. 65). The Lord, therefore, in superintending most carefully Swedenborg's intercourse with spirits and angels, had also respect to the "opening of the internal sense" through him.

It was, therefore, on both these accounts that at first a knowledge of the generals of the spiritual world was implanted by the Lord in Swedenborg's mind, and afterwards successively a knowledge of its

particulars; so that in time a most faithful reflex of the general features of the spiritual world was established in Swedenborg's rational mind, with a sufficient stock of particulars to impart life and light to these generals; and owing to this most wonderful superintendence by the Lord of Swedenborg's intercourse with spirits and angels in the other world, he was able to declare (see No. 77) that "what he learned from representations, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels was *from the Lord alone*."

That the opening of Swedenborg's spiritual sight was one of the means by which the Lord enabled him to acquire a *knowledge* of the internal sense, appears from the experiences and memorable relations with which his first work on the internal sense of the Word, his *Adversaria*, is interspersed.

We find there, for instance, that when he came to the history of Jacob, he was introduced in the other world to the veritable Jacob of the Old Testament (ii. 1511); when treating of Moses, he saw Moses, and had conversations with him (ii. 1779, iii. 7612); when of David, he spoke with David, and learned from him the state in which he was when writing his Psalms (*S. D.* 3674); and when he treated of the internal sense of Solomon's history, the Lord was pleased to make him acquainted with Solomon in the other life (*Adv.* ii. 1434; iii. 5225). In a similar manner the Lord introduced him afterwards to Paul, and the disciples generally, so that he was able to describe their state in the other life. As the Lord immediately superintended Swedenborg's intercourse

with spirits and angels in the other world, and as He had gifted Swedenborg with a double thought, and as the Lord, by an immediate influx into Swedenborg's internal thought, enabled him to distinguish in his external thought truth from falsity, therefore also Swedenborg was enabled to see the truth in connection with all these Biblical personages, and whatever he has written concerning their state in the other life is, and must be, strictly true. Besides, as by the Lord's influx into the knowledges that entered into Swedenborg's mind from without, everything "sensual, scientific, and rational," and hence everything "human," was separated thence (see No. 99), and as these knowledges thereby became truths (see No. 98), so also everything merely human, and thus every fallacy of the senses, was separated in Swedenborg's mind from the things he learned respecting the Biblical personages mentioned above ; wherefore it is utterly impossible that he could have been imposed upon by spirits passing themselves off to him as the spirits of these personages.

This process of providing vessels or knowledges for the reception of immediate revelation from the Lord was constantly going on in Swedenborg's mind. By the exercise of his external thought the Lord continually introduced him into knowledges serviceable for the reception of the doctrines of the internal sense, and by the immediate influx from the Lord everything "sensual, scientific, and rational," and thus everything of Swedenborg's own, or of his *proprium*, was separated from these knowledges, and they were converted into spiritual and natural truths.

As soon as Swedenborg's mind in this manner was fully stored with the requisite *knowledge* of the internal sense, and thus was fully prepared to receive from the Lord the *revelation* of that sense, the Lord revealed the internal sense to him "while he was reading the Word" (*T. C. R.* 779); yet the revelation of that sense from the Lord was altogether according to the nature of the vessels in Swedenborg's mind, and thus according to his knowledge of the internal sense. For the understanding or the revelation of the internal sense is always in accordance with the knowledges of the internal sense that are in the mind. If these knowledges be scanty and limited, the revelation from the Lord can be but scanty and limited; but if these knowledges be plentiful, then the revelations of the internal sense also will be rich and plentiful. Besides, if the receptive vessels of the mind are derived entirely from the sciences of the natural world, the revelation from the Lord will be limited to those doctrines of the internal sense which appear in the letter of the Word, and hence which appear in the light of the world. But if the Lord's presence in the Word, and hence the Divinity of the Word be denied, then no revelation whatever of the internal sense can be communicated by the Lord to man, and he is then unable to receive and understand any of the doctrines of the internal sense.

On this ground we are able to see why the revelation of the internal sense was so very gradual with Swedenborg himself. When he first entered upon the study of the Word in 1745, he was not able to penetrate beyond an understanding of its literal meaning,

wherefore in the beginning of the *Adversaria*, pp. 1 to 25, we find him labouring to explain, by means of the first chapter in Genesis, the physical creation of the universe. He was not able to penetrate then more deeply, and to receive a higher revelation from the Lord, simply because there were as yet no knowledges respecting the internal sense in his mind; and yet he had even then his spiritual sight opened by the Lord, and was enjoying an intercourse with spirits and angels in the other world.

In proportion, however, as his knowledge respecting the internal sense increased, he was able to receive from the Lord first the revelation of the internal-natural, afterwards that of the spiritual, and finally that of the celestial, sense of the Word.

Yet the mere storing of Swedenborg's mind with the knowledges of the internal sense was not the only intellectual operation by which he was enabled to see the internal sense within the letter of the Word, and thus to evolve the internal out of the literal sense for the benefit of men in this world. For this purpose it was also necessary that the ideas of his internal thought should be brought down into his external thought, which is on the same plane as the letter or the literal sense of the Word of God. This bringing down of the ideas of Swedenborg's internal thought into his external thought required, however, considerable exertion on his part; in fact it required from him most intense reflection on the spiritual meaning contained in the letter of the Word, and while, with the full use of his freedom and rationality, he was in such a state of reflection, the light of the

internal sense was drawn down from his internal into his external thought. At first the letter of the Word, on account of the state of his knowledges, appeared to him only in the general light of the internal sense, and in this general light he was able to distinguish the internal-natural or the internal-historical sense of the Word; afterwards, when knowledges became more abundant, this light became more particular, and he was able to discern the spiritual sense of the Word; and finally, as the knowledges, and by the knowledges the light of the least particulars of the internal sense, was added, he was able to perceive the celestial sense of the word.

The internal process, therefore, which took place in Swedenborg's soul when he wrote the doctrines of the internal sense from the Lord, is as follows:—He was in external thought while reading the letter of the Word of God in the natural world. In that state, with the full use of his freedom and rationality, he reflected concerning the spiritual sense contained in the letter, and for this purpose collected from the vast stores of his memory every knowledge, or rather every truth, bearing on this subject; and while his mind was thus on a stretch, and he was intent upon fathoming the hidden meaning of the letter of the Word, the revelation of the internal sense by influx from the internal into the external thought was added to this state of reflection, and then Swedenborg clearly saw the internal sense from the Lord, and not from himself. And while he was writing down the result of his internal revelation, the immediate and the mediate influxes from the Lord were so intimately conjoined

in him, and he was so thoroughly "filled with the Spirit of the Lord" (*T. C. R.* 779), that it was impossible for him to write otherwise than as the Spirit of God directed him.

As Swedenborg at such times was entirely "filled by the Spirit of God," and as he was then entirely removed from his own, or from his *proprium*, he declared in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, No. 6597, that "the internal sense was *dictated* to him out of heaven" (*quod ille e cœlo mihi dictatus fuerit*); and in the preface to the *Apocalypse Revealed* he makes the following statement:—

(101.) "Every one may see that the Apocalypse cannot be explained at all except by the Lord alone; for each word in it contains arcana which would never be known without special illustration, and hence without special revelation; wherefore it pleased the Lord to open the sight of my spirit, and to teach me. Do not therefore believe that I took anything therein from myself, or from an angel, but from the Lord alone. The Lord also said by an angel to John: "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book" (chap. xxii. 10), by which is meant that they are to be manifested." (See also No. 52.)

Particulars of the state in which Swedenborg was while writing the doctrines of the internal sense are given in the following passage:—

(102.) "The signification of the things here written was revealed to me in a wonderful manner. Without revelation it is impossible to understand such things. There was a dictation in the thought, but in a wonderful manner. The thought was thereby led to an understanding of these words, and the idea was kept fixed upon each single expression; it seemed as if it was fastened to it by a heavenly force. Thus this revelation took place in a sensible manner.

"The process is different when the thought is enlightened manifestly by a certain light, and when the writing is directed so that not

even the least word can be written differently. Sometimes this is done in a less sensible manner, but at other times so very sensibly that the finger is led by a higher power as to what to write, and it is impossible to write otherwise. This also happens not only with the perception of the thing added, but it repeatedly happened in a variety of ways without perception, so that I did not know the connection before, but only after, the writing. This last species of revelation, however, occurred very rarely, and then only for the sake of information, and because revelations are sometimes effected in this manner. These papers, however, were destroyed, because the Lord Messiah was not willing that this [*i.e.* that the revelations by Swedenborg] should take place in this manner" (*Adv.* iii. 7167).

The great difference therefore between Swedenborg's revelation and that of the prophets among the Jews is, that Swedenborg had a perception of the meaning of what he wrote and the prophets had not, and that Swedenborg was not allowed to write anything to which perception had not been added. Another distinction was, that the prophets wrote as the Lord dictated to them through spirits whom He filled with His Spirit; while Swedenborg received his revelation immediately from the Lord Himself, who dictated to him what to write by influx into his internal thought. Swedenborg therefore wrote by internal dictation from the Lord Himself, and not by external dictation through spirits, and whenever Swedenborg wrote anything concerning the doctrines of the internal sense, the spirits by whom he was surrounded had to keep perfectly quiet; this is stated by him in the following words:—

(103.) "It was forbidden that anything should be dictated to me in a loud voice; although conversations have been carried on with me in a loud voice almost continuously for quite a long time; during the act of writing, however, silence prevails" (*Adv.* iii. 7167).

We see, therefore, that Swedenborg was internally inspired by the Lord Himself, while the prophets were externally inspired by means of spirits who were filled by the Spirit of the Lord. Besides, Swedenborg was thus internally inspired by the Lord, not only while reading the letter of the Word in the natural world, but also while he was in consort with spirits and angels in the other world; and as he enjoyed "sensitive reflection" (see No. 79) while in the spiritual world, everything that he saw and heard in the spiritual world was impressed upon his memory, so that he remembered it fully when he was in his natural thought in the natural world; and as he was internally inspired by the Lord when this impression was first made in his memory in the spiritual world, this state of internal inspiration returned when he wrote down his spiritual experience in the natural world; on this account he made the following general statement to Gjörwell, the Royal Librarian in Stockholm, in 1765 :—

(104.) "When I think of what I am to write, and while I am writing, I am gifted with a *perfect inspiration*; formerly this would have been my own, but now I know for certain that what I write is the living truth of God" (*Anmärkningar i Svenska Historien*, vol. i. p. 223).¹

The state of external inspiration in which the prophets were while writing the letter of the Word of God is described by Swedenborg most minutely in the following interesting passage, which also throws additional light on the state of his own inspiration :—

(105.) "When an angel inspires or breathes words into a prophet,

¹ See *Document 251*, No. 7, in vol. ii. of *Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, edited by the Rev. R. L. Tafel.

or into those by whom the words of inspiration are pronounced, he is only in spiritual things ; but when he acts upon the mind of him who is inspired, he excites there a thought which in the usual mode falls into human expressions. These expressions are such as are in the prophet ; thus they are in accordance with the comprehension and in accordance with the form peculiar to him. This is the reason why the style of the prophets is so various, and why it is with every one who is inspired according to the analytical form of his thought, as it was acquired beforehand. Nevertheless, I am able to declare in the most solemn manner, that with him who is inspired there is not the least thing in any expression, not even an iota, which is not inspired, although it is varied a little according to the gift and endowment of him who utters the inspiration ; yet so, that even then there is not an iota that is not inspired.

“In this manner the hymns of praise were inspired which occur in the books of Moses, in Judges, and in the Psalms that were sung by David, by whom this has also been observed, likewise in the prophets. But where it says “Jehovah hath spoken it,” the inspiration took place by a loud voice. This loud voice is like that of a man who is speaking at various distances ; far off and again near, so that the direction whence the sound comes may be known. This is so well known to me that nothing is better known ; it came even from a tower, from a hill, or from the direction above the head. . . . Although this voice is as clear and loud as that of a man who is speaking, since it can be heard even when others are speaking, still it does not enter the ear by the air from without, but is conveyed to the ear from within, wherefore it is not heard by the persons who are present. Nevertheless some spirits thought the words were heard also by the persons present with me, because while I was speaking with these persons my words were heard by them almost in the same manner in which I heard theirs. My language with them was of a like nature, for that also was sonorous in their ears” (*Adv.* iii. 6965, 6966).

From this passage it appears that when the literal sense of the Word was inspired or breathed into the prophets it was “varied a little” by their intellectual character, from which we are bound to conclude that the doctrines of the internal sense upon being received in Swedenborg’s mind were also “varied a little” by

his intellectual character. But as in the case of the letter of the Word this "variation" did not interfere in the least with the force and power of the Divine inspiration, and as we read that there is nevertheless "not even an iota in the letter of the Word that is not inspired," so also the fact of the doctrines of the internal sense being "varied a little" by the intellectual character of Swedenborg, does not render them a whit less inspired, nor does it militate in the least against that other fact, that in those writings which contain the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word of God, there is not a single expression that has not been written "by the Lord through Swedenborg," and that does not come to us with Divine authority. From this passage it also appears that the expression of truth is indeed "varied a little" by the *intellectual* character of the recipient, but it is not stated that it is influenced also "by the individualities of feeling," or by the affectional character of the recipient, as is maintained in the argument quoted on page 52.

That the inspiration of Swedenborg reached not only from his internal into his external thought, but was continued even into the expressions of his natural language, is clearly proved by the following passage:—

(106.) "To-day it was given me to know that . . . language follows from the thought according to the ideas of thought, and that *language is a natural consequence which follows in order*" (S. D. 2799).

If, therefore, "language follows from the thought according to the ideas of thought," and if "language is a natural consequence which follows in order," such must have been the case also with Swedenborg; and

if the Lord by His mediate and immediate influxes governed and determined not only Swedenborg's internal, but also his external thought, and if Swedenborg's language "followed according to the ideas of his thought," being "their natural consequence," the inspiration of the Lord must have been continued even into the very words that Swedenborg wrote, so that he could say in very truth, "Those books are to be enumerated which were written *by the Lord through me (a Domino per me)* from the beginning to the present day" (see No. 10); and that in respect to the work on *Heaven and Hell* he could declare :—

(107.) "The bishop was told that this was not my work but the Lord's work, who desired to reveal the nature of heaven and hell, and of man's life after death, and to teach the things respecting the Last Judgment, and likewise that theological subjects do not transcend the human understanding" (*S. D.* vol. iii. part 2, p. 205).

Sometimes it is objected that Swedenborg's writings cannot be inspired, because they are not written in the language of correspondence. This objection seems plausible, but it can very easily be disproved.

In the first place, the language of correspondences is not necessarily inspired; for there are books in existence which are written in correspondences, and yet are not Divinely inspired; notably so, among the books of the Bible as received by Christians in general, the Book of Job and the Song of Solomon. On this subject Swedenborg says :—

(108.) "The most ancient style of writing was representative, in which things were represented by persons, and where expressions were used, by which quite different things were understood. The profane writers in those times composed their histories thus; and even the things of

civil and moral life were thus treated, so that nothing that was written was altogether such as it appeared in the letter, and that something quite different was understood by their words ; yea, they even presented all affections whatever in the forms of gods and goddesses that were afterwards divinely worshipped by the heathens. Every learned man may know this, because such ancient books are still in existence. This mode of writing was derived from the Most Ancient people before the Flood, who represented to themselves heavenly and Divine things by the visible things on the earth and in the world, and they thus filled their minds and souls with delights and felicities in beholding the objects of the universe, especially such as were beautiful by form and order. All books of the Church in those times were therefore written in this style. The Book of Job is of such a nature, and the Song of Solomon was written in imitation of them ; besides many others that have perished" (*A. C.* 1756).

Besides, it is very plain that the language of correspondences is not different from that ordinarily used by man ; for the letter of the Word is written in the common language of man. The difference, therefore, is not in the language, but in the form of the thoughts which are expressed by the language.

We are taught that whatever descends from the higher heavens into the ultimate or last heaven, in that heaven assumes a representative character (see *A. C.* 10,276). When, therefore, the Lord's Divine Truth passes through the higher heavens into the ultimate heaven, and is received there by a spirit who acts as a medium for conveying the Divine Truth from that heaven to man, the Divine Truth in the mind of that spirit assumes the form of representative language, and in that form is communicated by the spirit to the man with whom he is associated ; but by the man this representative language is received in his own vernacular tongue.

From the fact, however, that the language of angels

upon descending from a higher into a lower heaven becomes representative, and that it is expressed there in the language of correspondences, it does not follow that the angels or spirits in conversing with one another use such a language. Swedenborg indeed states (*A. C.* 1641) that representations are adjoined by the spirits to their language, but he does not state anywhere that their language itself is of such a nature. He describes the language of spirits and angels as a language of ideas, so exquisite and perfect that they do not need any representative images in conveying their ideas to others. The correspondences of the literal sense of the Word, upon being perceived in the minds of men by angels of the spiritual heaven, are therefore not turned in their minds again into correspondences, but the natural or literal sense with them is turned into the spiritual sense, *i.e.* they perceive the doctrines which are represented in the literal sense; and the Word in the spiritual sense is nothing else but doctrine. This doctrine, and thus this spiritual sense, was seized by Swedenborg with his natural thought; and as much of this doctrine as could be accommodated to the comprehension of men, he brought down into the natural world, and expressed it there in the natural language of men. In the case of Swedenborg the language of the angels of the higher heavens did not descend into the ultimate heaven, and was not from it pronounced into his ear by a spirit of that heaven; but, on the contrary, the human language was taken, as it were, by him into those higher heavens, *i.e.* it accompanied him when the Lord introduced him, though as to his spirit he was still conjoined to his

body, to the angels of heaven, so that what he learned there from the angels he received in his external or natural thought,¹ and expressed in the natural language of men before it passed from these heavens into the ultimate heaven, and was turned there into representatives and correspondences. In the theological writings of Swedenborg we have therefore the substance of what the angels of the higher heavens perceive in the representatives and correspondences of the letter of the Word when it is read by men upon earth; that is, we have the wisdom of the angels of heaven so far as it could be expressed by the Lord Himself, through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, in the natural language of men.

We are aware that in declaring that Swedenborg's writings are inspired, although they are not written in correspondences, we lay ourselves open to a technical objection on the ground that the term "inspiration" is employed in the writings of the New Church for that which "descends from the Lord, and indeed through the angelic heaven, and thus through the world of spirits, until it reaches man, to whom it is presented such as it is in the letter [of the Word]" (*A. C.* 1887). See also *A. C.* 4373, and 9094.

Yet this definition by no means exhausts the sense in which the term "inspiration" is employed in the writings of the New Church; so we read in *A. C.* 9229: "The Lord alone is holy, and that which is holy pro-

¹ Angels and spirits conversed with Swedenborg in the other world in his vernacular tongue—thus in natural, and not in spiritual, language. See *C. L.* 326, and *T. C. R.* 280; also *S. D.* 2137, 2309. Compare also *H. H.* 246.

ceeds from the Lord. . . . On this account, when the Lord after the resurrection conversed with His disciples, He breathed on them (*inspiravit*), and said to them, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit.' For this reason also the Word is said to be *inspired*, because from the Lord; and they are said to have been inspired by whom the Word was written." In *T. C. R.* 140, the same passage of Scripture is explained thus: "The reason why the Lord breathed upon His disciples and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit,' was because this breathing upon them (*adspiratio*) was an external representative sign of Divine inspiration. *Inspiration, however, is an insertion into angelic societies.*"

Here we obtain quite a different definition of inspiration, and in fact a definition of that particular kind of inspiration which Swedenborg enjoyed from the Lord. For both in the spiritual world and also in the natural world, when "he was thinking of what he was to write, and while he was writing" (see No. 104), the Lord endowed him with inspiration by inserting him into the society of angels.

An instance in which he had inspiration conferred upon him by this means in the spiritual world, he records in a memorable relation (*T. C. R.* 135), where we read: "Then by the Lord's command three angels descended out of heaven, and were associated with me, in order that I might speak, from an interior perception, with those who were in the idea of three Gods; . . . and then I spoke with them from *inspiration* which was conferred upon me."

Another instance, showing that he was brought into a state of inspiration on earth, by having an angel

associated to him by the Lord, he relates in *Adversaria*, iii. No. 5394, thus : “ What was written above was *inspired* from an angel ; I could perceive this from the light, and other indications. The words flowed out spontaneously on the paper, but without dictation.”

Other instances, showing that Swedenborg came into a state of inspiration by the Lord's placing him in the society of angels, are the following :—

(109.) “ While writing to-day I experienced an angel directing what I wrote, and indeed, in such a manner that I thought thence that there is not the smallest particular but what takes place under the auspices and the direction of God Messiah ” (*S. D.* 446).

But that the inspiration by which Swedenborg was directed while writing his theological works was similar in kind to that which resulted in the written Word of God on earth, is clearly proved by the following passage, where it is shown that spirits, by noticing the state of inspiration in which Swedenborg was while writing his works, were enabled to conclude thence as to the nature of the inspiration of God's Word ; we read :—

(110.) “ Some that were raised into heaven saw particularly that the things that are written in God's Word are inspired ; for there appeared to them the manner and also the great abundance of what flowed into the things that were written by me ; yea, not only what flowed into the meaning, but even into the particular words, and into the ideas of the words. It seemed to them also as if some were holding my hand, as it were, and were writing, and they thought that it was they who wrote. This also it was granted to me formerly to perceive by a spiritual idea—yea even to feel, as it were—viz., that [there is such an influx] into every smallest thing of each little letter that I wrote. Hence it appears in clear light that the Lord's Word is inspired as to each letter ” (*S. D.* 2270).

On the other hand, it is thought by some that Swedenborg's theological writings cannot be inspired, because in his manuscripts there are whole sentences and paragraphs crossed out. This objection is made by those who confound internal with external inspiration. But as soon as it is acknowledged that Swedenborg was internally and not externally inspired, that, therefore, he was inspired as to his internal and not as to his external thought, and that while being inspired as to his internal thought, as to his external thought he continued in the enjoyment of his freedom and rationality—the force of this objection is lost. The trifling character of this objection is, therefore, fully established as soon as it is known that Swedenborg while writing the internal sense from the Lord was in a state of the most intense reflection, and that, Prometheus-like, he had to convey the sacred fire of inspiration from heaven to earth. Wherefore it is quite possible that in writing the internal sense from the Lord in the natural world, he came into the full state of inspiration only gradually, in proportion as his state of reflection became intensified, and that he crossed out what he wrote in the beginning in order to express what he received from the Lord afterwards more clearly and more precisely. On the other hand, again, it is most probable that his external thought, and hence his hand, became overpowered sometimes by the flood of spiritual light streaming down into him, so that his thought outran his pen. On account of the peculiar nature of Swedenborg's inspiration, which was internal and not external, it was therefore quite necessary that he should prepare two copies of

his works, the first being the rough draught, and the second the clean copy written out for the printer.

Such double copies exist at the present day of the *Apocalypse Explained*; the first draught copy of the *Arcana* also, from the 12th chapter of Genesis, was preserved by Swedenborg among his manuscripts, while the clean copy for the printer he sent by post from Stockholm to London.

The reason of the many printer's errors in his published writings is stated by Swedenborg's friend, Carl Robsahm, thus: "There is one thing to be observed with regard to most of his spiritual writings, that the proof-sheets were corrected very badly, so that printer's errors occur very often. The cause of this, he said, was that the printer once for all had undertaken the proof-reading, as well as the printing" (*Documents respecting Swedenborg*, vol. i. p. 43).

The presence of these errors in Swedenborg's published writings does not embarrass those of his readers who believe that he was internally inspired, and it is a stumbling-block only for those who do not distinguish between internal and external inspiration.

These errors also are as easily removed from Swedenborg's published writings, as similar errors have in course of time been removed from the printed text of our Bible. For the satisfaction of Swedenborg's readers we may however state, that from a close comparison of many of the *errata* discovered by Dr. Immanuel Tafel in the printed copy of the *Arcana Cœlestia*, with the first draught copy of that work preserved in the library of the Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, we are able to declare that none of

these errors exist in the copy written by Swedenborg's own hand ; whence it follows that these errors were introduced by the printers, and were not made by him.

There remains only one objection to be answered which has been advanced against the Divinity of at least some of the teachings contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg. This is based on the gradation of the light or the illumination which has been noticed in his writings by some of his readers.

It is maintained by some, for instance, that Swedenborg evidently was not in such a high state of illustration while writing the first volume of the *Arcana Cœlestia*, as he was while writing the last volume ; because it is plain that his explanations in the first volume are much less full than in the last volume. It is also maintained that one of the memorable relations appended to the chapters in the *Apocalypse Revealed* is reprinted with variations in *The True Christian Religion*, showing that when writing the latter work he enjoyed a higher state of illustration. Some go even so far as to call this latter work Swedenborg's "one great work," passing slightly over the numerous other works which he wrote and published before *The True Christian Religion*.

We have seen that the *revelation* of the internal sense to Swedenborg depended upon the state of his *knowledge* of that sense ; because "this sense cannot be *revealed* to any one unless he *know* that sense" (see No. 96) ; and because "all illustration," and hence all revelation, "while reading the Word, is according to the light in which any one is by the

knowledges that are with him" (see No. 63). From the fact that each of Swedenborg's theological works differs from all the others, it follows also that a special kind of knowledges was required by Swedenborg to enable him to receive in his mind from the Lord the revelation of the *Arcana Cælestia*, and a different kind of knowledges in order to enable him to receive from the Lord the revelation of *The True Christian Religion*. Besides, from the fact that "the Lord through Swedenborg," in the years 1747 to 1756, wrote the *Arcana Cælestia*, we are authorized to conclude, or rather we are bound to conclude, that he was fully prepared at that time to write from the Lord that work; and from the fact that he wrote *The True Christian Religion* in 1770, we may again conclude that he was provided then with the requisite knowledge to enable him to receive from the Lord the teaching contained in that work; but from the fact that Swedenborg required a different preparation as to knowledges in the case of *The True Christian Religion* than he required in the case of the *Arcana Cælestia*, it does not follow that the teachings contained in the latter work are less Divine or less authoritative than those contained in the former.

The same argument applies to the difference noted by some between the first and last volumes of the *Arcana Cælestia*. When writing from the Lord the first volume of that work, Swedenborg's mind was sufficiently stocked with the knowledges pertaining to the internal sense to enable him to receive from the Lord the revelation of the internal sense contained in

that volume, although his mind may not have been sufficiently prepared to enable him to receive the teachings contained in the last volume of that work ; but there was no occasion whatever that Swedenborg should have been prepared in 1747 for writing the portion of it which he did not write until 1756.

There is, however, not the least necessity to assume that Swedenborg in 1747 was not fully prepared to write the whole of the internal sense contained in the *Arcana Cœlestia* ; for, according to his own statement (*T. C. R.* 779), he was commissioned to “*teach*” the doctrines of the internal sense, and not simply to *reveal* them. In those works, therefore, which he wrote as the Lord’s servant, he did not communicate the doctrines of the internal sense in the form in which he himself was able to comprehend them, but he accommodated them to the comprehension of his readers. Hence that wonderful system of gradation and accommodation which is noticed throughout the whole of Swedenborg’s writings. That in writing his theological works he had to accommodate them to the state of men upon earth, is plainly stated by him in *S. D.* 3473, where we read : “ I had to write so as to be understood by men, and that they might perceive what I wrote ; for if I should write according to the understanding and perception of spirits and angels, it would be so obscure to men that they would scarcely see anything, and would be in the midst of darkness.”

The same is corroborated by Swedenborg in a representation described in *S. D.* 4133 to 4135, where he states that the reason why so many parallel pas-

sages are given in the *Arcana Cœlestia* is entirely due to the state of mankind; and where he also declares that a hypothetical statement of the truth is preferred by men to a direct statement of the same.

This accommodation of the doctrines of the internal sense to the state of reception of mankind, governed Swedenborg in the preparation of all those works which he wrote for publication; and of that description are all those works where he evolves the internal sense of the Word, whether published by himself or not. To that class of works belong both the *Adversaria* and the *Apocalypse Explained*. When writing the *Adversaria*, Swedenborg seems to have been actually under the impression that that was the great work which he was commissioned to write by the Lord, for throughout the whole of that work there are allusions to its publication; and on the title-page of his manuscript copy of the *Apocalypse Explained*, he actually states that this work will be published in London in 1760; he also referred to its publication in *The Last Judgment*, No. 42.

The only work which Swedenborg wrote entirely from his own point of view, and in which he did not accommodate himself to the state of his readers, was the *Memorabilia*, written from 1747 to 1765, and more generally known under the name given to it by Dr. Immanuel Tafel of the *Spiritual Diary*.

The most diverse opinions prevail on the credibility and the authority of this work among New Churchmen; some going so far as to place it above

all other works written by him ; while others regard it as inferior in value, and even express their sorrow at its having been published, and strongly condemn the practice of those who appeal to it as an authority, or base any of their arguments upon its teachings.

It is plain that the question as to the credibility or authority of the *Spiritual Diary* can be decided only on rational, and not on sentimental, grounds. The most rational argument however in this case is the opinion expressed by Swedenborg himself, because in this case we do not appeal to human reason, but to doctrine itself. He says in respect to the *Spiritual Diary* :—

(III.) “In general it is to be borne in mind that everything written in this book [*i.e.* in the *Spiritual Diary*] has not been written by me otherwise than from living experience, from conversation with spirits and angels, from thought like tacit speech communicated to me while writing, from things insinuated by those who were present during such experiences, and under whose direction I was while thinking and writing, even as to my hand ; so that all things contained in these three books, and likewise in other places, although they frequently do not cohere, are nevertheless experiences or facts derived in their own peculiar way from spirits and angels” (*S. D.* 2894).

If to this statement there is added what Swedenborg declares in No. 77, viz., “What I have learned from representations, visions, and from conversations with spirits and angels is from the Lord alone,” it follows that all things that Swedenborg wrote in the *Spiritual Diary* are facts, and that they were written not from himself, *but from the Lord*. In another place he says respecting the contents of the *Spiritual Diary* :—

(112.) “These are the things which I have now learned for several

years by living experience, so that they are among the things with which I am acquainted by instruction better than with other things" (*S. D.* 3788). And again he says, "These things have been written by influx from heaven, from the wisdom of the angels there."

Surely if Swedenborg himself speaks so highly respecting the contents of the *Spiritual Diary*, we who believe his testimony can do no less than regard its teachings in a similar light; and if the ideas that we have formed to ourselves on spiritual things differ from those laid down in the *Spiritual Diary*, it behoves us to be humble and docile, and to accept the teaching of him who in writing this work "*was instructed by no spirit, and by no angel, but by the Lord alone* (see No. 77). It is well for us also in such a case to be mindful of the warning given to Paul: "*It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks*" (*Acts ix. 5*).

But should the objection be raised, "If the *Spiritual Diary* was written by Swedenborg from the Lord, and not from himself, why then did he not publish it?" we answer, for the same reason that he did not publish his first treatise on *Conjugal Love*, which has not been found, but of which the index has been preserved, and also his *Doctrine of Charity*, his posthumous treatises concerning *Divine Love and Wisdom*, concerning *The Sacred Scripture*, concerning *The Lord and the Athanasian Creed*, concerning *The Last Judgment* and the *Spiritual World*, with several other little works published by Dr. Immanuel Tafel as Appendices to the *Spiritual Diary*. All these works, including the *Coronis* and the *Canons*, were either written from Swedenborg's own point of

view, and were not accommodated to the state of the men living at his time, or else they contain spiritual *knowledges*, by which Swedenborg was prepared for those works which he published during his lifetime. As all these works, however, were of use in preparing Swedenborg's mind for receiving from the Lord the *revelation* of the doctrines of the internal sense, so also these works were carefully preserved in order to enable us to obtain higher and deeper views of the subjects discussed in the works published by Swedenborg himself.

A peculiar case is that of the *Apocalypse Explained*. This work comes to us accredited in exactly the same way as the *Spiritual Diary*; for it is one of those works which were left by Swedenborg in MS. ; and yet its credibility and authority have never been questioned in the Church, even though it presents one feature which is calculated to raise greater doubt in a rational and critical mind than any point connected with the *Spiritual Diary*. We allude to the fact that the explanation of the internal sense of the Book of Revelation in the *Apocalypse Explained*, differs in many particulars from that given in the *Apocalypse Revealed*, which Swedenborg wrote and published four years later. The difference is not of such a nature that the *Apocalypse Revealed* contradicts the explanation given in the *Apocalypse Explained*; but while in the latter work the doctrine of the internal sense is applied to the Church universal, in the former work it is treated exclusively in its bearing on the New Jerusalem Church; and it can scarcely be doubted that Swedenborg intends the members of the New Church to use for their doctrine the expla-

nation given in the *Apocalypse Revealed*; for that is the explanation which was not only written, but also published by him.

This, therefore, is an occasion where Swedenborg, by the elaboration of one work, was evidently prepared for writing another work, and where, in the second work, he has particularized the teachings of the first. The statements made in the *Spiritual Diary*, however, have not been qualified or particularized in any other work, nor have the textual explanations of other parts of Scripture, and the general doctrinal elucidations contained in the *Apocalypse Explained*, been stated differently in any succeeding work. The whole of the *Apocalypse Explained* has been written by Swedenborg in as high a degree of illumination or inspiration as he enjoyed while writing any other of his works; but the receptive vessels, or the state of his knowledge, while writing the *Apocalypse Explained*, differed from the state of his knowledge when writing the *Apocalypse Revealed*.

As Swedenborg progressed with the *Apocalypse Explained*, knowledges to the effect that the New Jerusalem Church in particular, and not the Church in general, is treated of in the internal sense of the Book of Revelation, began to accumulate in his mind, especially while he was writing the explanation of the twelfth chapter; and this knowledge was established in his mind in all its clearness when, in the nineteenth chapter, he came to treat of the White Horse; wherefore the work on the *Apocalypse Explained* was then abruptly brought to a close, and Swedenborg was prepared to write from the Lord the *Apocalypse Revealed*.

The relative position of the *Apocalypse Explained*, and the *Apocalypse Revealed*, shows better than anything else that, even in the case of Swedenborg, the Lord could not pour new knowledges into his mind from within, and that the revelation which he was able to receive from the Lord was altogether according to the state of knowledges with him. The Lord, indeed, superintended the acquisition of knowledges by Swedenborg, and by His mediate influx led him into all requisite knowledges; yet this required both time and labour even in the case of one whose greatest delight consisted in not doing his own, but the Lord's, will upon earth.

In concluding our chapter on the nature of Swedenborg's inspiration, we cannot do so in more appropriate language than that in which he himself sums up the wonderful state in which, by the Lord's Divine Mercy, he continued for nearly twenty-nine years:—

(113.) “The manifestation of the Lord in person, and the introduction by the Lord into the spiritual world, as well as to sight, as to hearing and speech, is superior to all miracles; for it is not stated anywhere in history that such an intercourse with angels and spirits has been granted to any one since the creation of the world. For daily I am with the angels there, as with the men in the world, and now for twenty-seven years. The proofs of such intercourse are the books published by me on *Heaven and Hell*, and some memorable relations on this subject in my last work called *The True Christian Religion*; likewise what is stated there about Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and the inhabitants of most kingdoms; besides the various testimonies known in the world, and other things that are both known and unknown. Say, who has ever before known anything about heaven and hell, about the state of man after death, about spirits and angels, and so forth? In addition to these most manifest proofs is this, that the spiritual sense of

the Word has been revealed *by the Lord through me (a Domino per me)*. Who has known anything respecting this sense since the revelation of the Word by the Israelitish writings? And yet this sense is the very sanctuary of the Word; the Lord Himself is in this sense with His Divine nature, while He is in the natural sense with His human nature. Not a single iota of this can be opened except by the Lord alone. This revelation is superior to all revelations that have heretofore been made since the creation of the world. By this revelation a communication has been opened between men and the angels of heaven, and the conjunction of both worlds has been established; for man is in the natural, and the angels are in the spiritual sense. On this subject read what has been written in the chapter on the Sacred Scripture [*i.e.* in the *T. C. R.*]” (*Invitatio ad Novam Ecclesiam*, Nos. 43, 44).

Before closing the present subject it is requisite to guard against a misapprehension which has arisen in the minds of some on hearing us claim a Divine authority for the doctrines contained in Swedenborg’s theological writings, and also on hearing our declaration that Swedenborg in composing these writings was in a state of inspiration, and not simply of illumination, from the Lord: for thus, they say, we unmistakably speak of “the Divine inspiration of Swedenborg,” and hence make him equal to God.

We speak of the Divine authority of the letter of the Sacred Scripture, and declare the Scripture to be inspired; we also declare that Moses in writing the Pentateuch, and the prophets in delivering their prophecies, were inspired by the Lord: and yet no one on that account, as far as we are aware, speaks of “the Divine inspiration of Moses, Isaiah, Matthew, or Luke,” in a general way. They were, indeed, Divinely inspired at the time when they wrote the books bearing their names, but they were not inspired at any other time.

So also, in declaring that Swedenborg while writing his theological writings was in a state of inspiration from the Lord, we indeed maintain that then and there he was governed by the Holy Spirit, so that what he wrote came from the Lord, and not from himself; and yet we are far from maintaining that he was always in such a state of inspiration, and thus that he laid entirely aside his human qualities, and put on the Divine attributes of the Holy Spirit. Hence also we speak of the Divine authority of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, revealed to us through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and we consider it our duty to investigate the nature of the inspiration which he enjoyed while writing these works; but we never speak of "the Divine inspiration of Swedenborg" in the general way in which this has been erroneously attributed to us.¹

Finally, in claiming for Swedenborg the predicate "inspiration" in this particular way, we base ourselves on Swedenborg's own statement to Gjörwell, the Royal Librarian of Sweden, to whom he said, "When I think of what I am to write, and while I am writing, I am gifted with a *perfect inspiration*; formerly this would have been my own, but now I know for certain that what I write is the living truth of God" (see No. 104).

¹ See the *New Jerusalem Messenger* for August 2, 1876, p. 56.

CHAPTER VII.

SWEDENBORG CONSIDERED AS A TRANSLATOR OF SCRIPTURE.

THERE are those who say, We are willing to acknowledge that Swedenborg was the Divinely appointed means for the revelation of the doctrines of the internal sense; we are willing, therefore, to acknowledge him as a final authority in everything that concerns the spiritual sense of Scripture, but we are not willing to acknowledge him as a competent authority in translating the letter of the Word of God.

There are, in fact, some who, in translating from the Latin Swedenborg's theological works, deliberately ignore his translation of Scripture, and insert in its place the common English version.

There are several reasons which prompt them to do so. The common version of Scripture is, in their eyes, the only bond remaining between New Churchmen and those who profess the doctrines of the Old Church; and in giving up the authorized version of Scripture they think they give up the common ground on which they can meet the members of the Old Church. As a policy of accommodation, therefore, they think we ought to ignore the authorized version of the New Church, and adopt the authorized version of the Old Church.

Others, again, may be convinced of their own inability to translate correctly the Word of God from the original languages, and because they themselves are unable to do this, seem to think that no one else in the New Church is able to do so. Sceptical as to the scholarship of the New Church, they seem inclined to adopt without question the scholarship of the Old Church, and to oppose this even to the scholarship of him who "from his earliest youth was prepared by the Lord" for the mission of revealing to mankind the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture.

As such an ignoring of the claims of the New Church translation of Scripture can arise only from an unacquaintance with those parts of the writings of our Church in which the importance of a genuine translation of Scripture is taught, it becomes our duty to place this whole subject in its proper light by a constant reference to the doctrines of our Church.

In order, then, that we may be able to see clearly and definitely the importance of a genuine translation of the Sacred Scripture, we must first have a clear and definite idea of the uses of the Sacred Scripture ; and after knowing what the uses of the Sacred Scripture are, we can by comparison judge how these uses are performed by a translation which is genuine, and by one which is not genuine.

A translation is genuine when it calls up in the mind the very same ideas which are called up by the reading of the original ; and a translation is not genuine when it substitutes different ideas from those which are furnished by the original.

The uses of the Sacred Scripture are twofold : in

the *first* place, it is the source whence all the doctrines of the Christian Church are drawn, and by which these doctrines are afterwards confirmed; according to this statement :—

(114.) “ Doctrine is to be drawn from the literal sense of the Word, and to be confirmed thereby, because the Lord there, and not anywhere else, is present with man and illustrates and teaches him the truths of the Church; for the Lord never operates anything except in a state of fulness; and the Word is in its fulness in the sense of the letter, wherefore doctrine is to be derived thence ” (S. S. 53). “ Doctrine, however, is not only to be drawn from the letter of the Word, but also to be confirmed thereby: for unless the truth of doctrine is confirmed by the letter of the Word, it appears as if only the intelligence of man, and not the Lord’s Divine Wisdom, is contained in it. Doctrine also in this case would be like a house in the air, and not upon the earth, and thus it would be without a basis ” (S. S. 54).

The *second* use of the Sacred Scripture is that, by means of its literal sense, the conjunction of man with the Lord is effected, and his consociation with angels. On this subject we read :—

(115.) “ I was informed from heaven that the Most Ancient people had immediate revelation, because their interiors were turned towards heaven, and that the Lord’s conjunction with the human race was thence at that time. That after their times, however, there was not such immediate revelation, but a mediate one by correspondences: for their whole Divine worship consisted of such correspondences; wherefore the Churches of that period were called representative Churches. They knew then what correspondence and representation is; and also that all things on earth are correspondences of the spiritual things which are in the Church and in heaven, or what is the same thing, that they represent them; wherefore the natural things which were the externals of their worship served them as means of thinking spiritually, and thus with the angels. After the knowledge of correspondences and representations had become obliterated, the Word was written, in which all the words, and *the meaning of the words*, are correspondences, and thus contain a spiritual or internal sense in which the angels are. When

man therefore reads the Word, and perceives it according to the sense of the letter, or according to its external meaning, angels perceive it according to the internal sense, or according to its spiritual meaning. For all thought with the angels is spiritual, but the thought of men is natural; their thoughts, indeed, appear diverse, but still they are one by correspondence. Hence it is, that after man had removed himself from heaven and broken the bond, the Lord provided a means of conjunction of heaven with man by means of the Word" (*H. H.* 306).

We see, therefore, that the Word, on the one hand, furnishes to man precepts of life, and enables him to obey them, because the Lord Himself is present in it; and, on the other hand, effects conjunction between the angels of heaven and the men of the Church on earth.

The power of the Word, therefore, does not consist merely in its containing precepts of life, and in enabling man to distinguish between what is good and evil; but its power consists also in this, that by virtue of the correspondences which are contained in it the Lord Himself, together with the angels of heaven, is able to be present in it, and to assist man with His omnipotent power.

This power of the Word resides in its fulness in the original text; for there we have the original words upon which the Spirit of God alighted in the minds of the prophets, through whom the Word of God was communicated to man.

Concerning the power of the Word of God in the original Hebrew tongue, we read as follows:—

(116.) "A small piece of paper was let down, written over with Hebrew letters such as were used in the most ancient times. They differ somewhat from the Hebrew letters of the present day, but not much. An angel who was with me told me that he understood every-

thing that was written there from the mere shape of the letters ; and that each letter contained some idea, even a whole chain of ideas ; he informed me also of the signification of the י (Jod), the א (Aleph), the ה (Heth) ; but he was not permitted to give the meaning of the remaining letters. He also said that all things of the Word are thus inspired, and that the third heaven, when the Word is read by man in the Hebrew text, knew thence everything Divine-celestial which was inspired ; further, that all things there in general and in particular treat concerning the Lord. This sense cannot be expounded, because it is the very celestial sense, not even an idea of which can be expressed by human language. From this it may appear that the Word, according to the Lord's words, is inspired according to each jot, and also according to each tittle. I conversed with them on the circumstance that the form of the Hebrew letters only presented these things ; and the cause was traced to the form of the flux of heaven which is such ; and as the celestial angels are in the flux which constitutes the basis of order, they are able to have such a perception" (*S. D.* 4671).

Again we read :—

(117.) "When the Jews read the Word in the original language, the celestial angels derive from their ideas, which are drawn from the very form of their language, the celestial things which are in the Word. For the correspondence of that language as to its syllables is with celestial forms." And then Swedenborg continues, "It appears hence that the Word is Divine not only as to every word, but also as to its syllables and letters ; and it may be known hence what is signified by this, that not even the least jot or the least tittle shall perish. From this also may be seen the reason why the Jews were induced to number every letter in the Word ; and why they believed that arcana were contained in each letter, although they did not know how" (*S. D.* 3619, 3621).

It may be useful to mention here that what are called Hebrew letters at the present day are not the Hebrew letters proper, but the Chaldaic characters. In the Hebrew letters proper we are told there is not a single straight line, but they consist altogether of

curves and spires. These ancient Hebrew characters have been preserved among the Jews, and because the shape of the Hebrew letters proper differs from that of the Hebrew printed letters, therefore in their synagogues the lessons from the Word are always, if possible, read from manuscript copies. Swedenborg refers to this fact in these words:—

(118.) “The Jews have been preserved on account of the Hebrew language; they have also the Word written in the ancient Hebrew language, where all letters are inflected, because the Word when written in that character has a more immediate communication with heaven” (*S. D.*, vol. vii., Appendix I. p. 83).

Such is the nature of the conjunction with heaven, when the Word is read in the original Hebrew language, especially when this is written in the ancient Hebrew characters. We have seen also that when read in that language it effects conjunction with the angels of the inmost or third heaven. It is plain, however, that this principle of conjunction is completely lost when the Word is translated from the original Hebrew into any other language.

Yet it does not follow from this that there is no conjunction with heaven effected by means of the translated copies of the Word; for we have seen that in the Word not only the very words, but also “the meaning of the words,” consist of correspondences, and effect conjunction. In the translated copies of the Word, therefore, the very words, and the apexes, jots, and tittles of the words, are no longer inspired, but only *the meaning of the words*; conjunction with heaven is then effected by “the meaning of the words” of Scripture when read in a holy state; and this meaning,

it seems, is perceived not by the celestial, but by the spiritual angels of heaven, and conjunction with them is thereby effected (see Nos. 116, 117).

We see, therefore, how important it is that the *meaning* of the original words should be properly rendered in translation.

The reason, however, why it is so very important that the meaning of every word in the original should be properly rendered, and that there should be nothing dropped, and nothing added, is on account of the internal sense, lest this be mutilated and violated. And that there is a danger of mutilating, and thus of injuring the internal sense by an improper translation, may be seen from the following passages from the Writings:—

(119.) “The internal text is so continuous that not even the least word can be omitted without an interruption of the series” (*A. C.* 7933).

Again Swedenborg says:—

(120.) “I can assert that every least particular in the Word contains in itself a spiritual sense, and that all things of the Church as to its spiritual state are in that sense described in fulness from beginning to end; and because each word there signifies something spiritual, therefore not a single word can be omitted without the series of things in the internal sense undergoing a change; therefore at the end of the Book of Revelation it is said: ‘And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.’ The same is the case with the books of the Word of the Old Testament; there also each thing, and each expression, contains an internal or spiritual sense; wherefore, there also, no word can be removed. Hence it is that, by the Lord’s Divine Providence, these books, from the time when they were first written, have been preserved entire down to the very jot, by the care of a number of men, who have numbered every least particular

therein. This was provided by the Lord on account of the sanctity which is interiorly in every jot, letter, word, and thing" (*L. J.* 41).

We read further :—

(121.) "It is to be observed that in the spiritual sense all things cohere in a continuous series, and to its production every word in the literal or natural sense conspires; wherefore, if but the least word be removed, the connection would be broken, and the conjunction would perish. Lest, therefore, this should happen, it was added at the end of the prophetic Book of Revelation that not a word should be removed (xxii. 19). The same is the case with the prophetic books of the Old Testament; lest anything should be removed thence, by the Lord's Divine Providence each particular therein, down to the very letters, was numbered; this was done by the Masorites" (*S. S.* 13).

Another reason why the letter of the Word ought to be kept inviolate is this, that each part of the letter of the Word corresponds to, and thus effects conjunction with, a particular society of heaven; if therefore any part of the letter of the Word be dropped or mutilated by a false translation, the Word cannot effect conjunction with the whole of heaven, and hence not the whole of heaven can be brought near to man. This is supported by the following passage :—

(122.) "It has been granted me to know, by much experience, that a man has communication with heaven by means of the Word. In reading the Word, from the first chapter of Isaiah to the last of Malachi, with the Psalms of David, and keeping my thoughts fixed on the spiritual sense of each passage, it was granted me to perceive clearly that each verse communicates with some particular society in heaven, and thus that the whole Word communicates with the universal heaven, from whence it appeared, that as the Lord is the Word, so also heaven is the Word, since heaven is heaven from the Lord, and the Lord by the Word is the all of heaven" (*T. C. R.* 272).

As conjunction with the whole of heaven can be

effected only by the whole of the Word, therefore also we are taught that, principally on account of the reading of the Old Testament, the Jews have been preserved as a distinct people up to the present time.

This we find stated in the writings of our Church in the following language:—

(123.) “The Jewish nation has been preserved on account of the Word” (*A. C.* 4231). And again, “Because the tribe of Judah, more than other tribes, was of this character [that they could be in a holy external], and at this day, as formerly, keep holy those rites which can be observed out of Jerusalem, and also have a sacred veneration for their fathers, and an especial reverence for the Word of the Old Testament; and it was foreseen that the Christians would almost reject it, and would likewise defile its internals with things profane, therefore that nation has been hitherto preserved—according to the Lord’s words in Matthew (xxiv. 32): ‘Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away until all these things shall have happened’” (*A. C.* 3479). Further, “The reason why the Jewish nation has been preserved, and scattered over a large portion of the globe, is on account of the Word in its original language, which they above Christians consider holy; and in each particular of the Word is the Lord’s Divine, for it is the Divine Truth conjoined with Divine Good which proceeds from the Lord, and by this there is a conjunction of the Lord with the Church and the presence of heaven; and the presence of the Lord and of heaven is wherever the Word is read in a holy state. This is the end of the Divine Providence for which that nation has been preserved and scattered over a large portion of the globe” (*D. P.* 260). “If the Christians,” says Swedenborg again (*A. C.* 3479), “as they were acquainted with internal things, had also lived as internal men, it would have been otherwise. If this had been so, that nation, like other nations, before many ages would have been cut off.”

After examining the various means employed by the Divine Providence to keep the power of the letter of the Word unimpaired and inviolate, we shall inquire more particularly into those measures by which the

power of the Word to consociate heaven with man may be impaired by men.

The power of the Word of God in the *first* place is impaired when it is not read in a holy state, for it effects conjunction with heaven only when he who reads it considers it as holy. This is clearly taught in what follows :—

(124.) “The spiritual and celestial senses of the Word are evolved out of the natural sense of the Word, when man, who considers the Word holy, reads it. This evolution is instantaneous, and so, consequently, is consociation” (*T. C. R.* 234).

And again its power is impaired when it is read from false doctrine, as appears from what follows :—

(125.) “Every one is allowed to understand the sense of the letter of the Word in simplicity, only he must not confirm the appearances of the truth which are there, so as to destroy genuine truth. For the interpretation of the Word, as to its spiritual sense, from the falsities of doctrine closes heaven and does not open it ; but the interpretation of the spiritual sense from the truths of doctrine opens heaven” (*De Verbo*, posthumous, No. 7).

From this it follows, that no one who looks upon the Word as a mere human composition can be conjoined with heaven by reading it, even although it is composed of correspondences, and by correspondences conjunction is effected with heaven. The Word of God also is shorn of its power when those who read it are confirmed in false doctrines.

But, on the other hand, it appears that those who read the Word from true doctrine have heaven opened to them, and that they are conjoined with the angels, who perceive the unperturbed Word of God in their minds.

Another means by which the power of the Word of God is impaired on earth is by a false translation. For by a false translation the continuity of the internal sense is broken just as much as when a word is dropped out of it. For when a word in the Sacred Scripture is wrongly translated, the passage in which it occurs causes a wrong idea in the mind, and if the idea be a central one, it may cast a false spiritual light over a whole chapter.

For instance, in Luther's German translation of Genesis (xi. 2), where the building of the tower of Babel is described, we read, "As they journeyed *eastward*, they found a plain in the land of Shinar," whereas the true translation is, "As they journeyed *from the east*." The meaning of the passage in a genuine translation is, that as the Church was moving *away* from the Lord, who is the *East*, they came into the state of evil represented by Shinar; but the words as translated by Luther give this spiritual meaning: As the Church was moving *towards* the Lord, who is represented by the East, they came into the state of evil represented by Shinar.

Again, in the story of Pharaoh's baker (Gen. xl. 16), we read these words: "I also was in my dream, and behold I had three *white* baskets upon my head." Instead of *white* the translation ought to have been *perforated*, or *full of holes*, which is a marginal reading. Now, the whole spiritual lesson of this dream hinges upon the fact of the baskets being *perforated*, and by substituting *white* instead, it is impossible for the internal sense to be evolved out of the literal sense. For by the three baskets are represented the three

degrees of the human mind, and by the head of the baker on which they rested is meant man's sensual degree, where all his evils are contained; when the degrees of the mind are properly organized of goods and truths, and thus not perforated, then the life of the Lord flowing into man is received in one of these degrees, and does not flow into what is man's own, or his *proprium*, represented by the baker's head; but when the intermediate degrees are not organized, and when thus there are no planes of perception or conscience in man, the degrees of a man's mind are then said to be *perforated*, and then the life from the Lord flows into man's *proprium*, and is there turned into evil and falsity. Wherefore also we read that Pharaoh's baker was condemned and hanged. Now the whole of this spiritual lesson is taken away from the letter of the Word when the word *white* is substituted for *perforated*. And so it is in a great number of other cases in the received English version of the Scriptures.

In the common English version we read (1 Kings vi. 7): "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither,"—whereas the real translation, warranted by the internal sense, reads thus: "As to the house itself, while it was being built, it was built of unhewn stone, just as it was brought thither." The very lesson which is intended to be taught in this passage of Scripture is lost as soon as it is intimated that the chisel passed in any wise over the surface of the stones, whether in the quarry or in the house of the Lord. For, building the house of the Lord of hewn

stones, or moving the chisel over it, is descriptive of the Church being built of truths furnished by man's self-derived intelligence, which is an abomination.

Again, there is the well-known passage (Ps. cxxvii. 2): "For so He giveth His beloved sleep;" which ought to read thus: "for He giveth it to His beloved in sleep," *i.e.* the Lord gives good to His beloved when they are not aware of it.

In the 133rd Psalm, again, the 3rd verse in a genuine translation reads thus: "As the dew of Hermon that descendeth upon the mountains of Zion." By Hermon, which is the highest mountain in Canaan, is meant heaven, and by the *dew of Hermon descending upon the mountains of Zion*, is meant that the truth of peace descends out of heaven into the hearts of those who are in genuine love to the Lord. As *mount Hermon* and the *mountains of Zion*, however, are in nature many hundred miles apart, and as in a natural sense *the dew of Hermon* can never descend *on the mountains of Zion*, the English translators thought it necessary to render the passage thus: "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion."

In the 23rd Psalm this passage occurs in the common English version: "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow OF DEATH, I will fear no evil;*" as if it was descriptive of man's passage by death from this world into the other, when yet the real translation is simply, "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of shade,*" or *darkness*, which means: Though I should be in severe temptation I shall not be afraid of the powers of hell. *By the valley of the shadow of*

death, would be meant a state of spiritual death, or of spiritual damnation, which is not meant here.

In the New Testament we shall only advert to the passage in John (i. 3), where we read in the common English version: "*All things were made by Him,*" *i.e.* by God; when yet it ought to read: *All things were made by it*, or *by the same*, *i.e.* by the Word, which is the rendering required by the internal sense.

It would have been easy for us to select hundreds of pages of inaccurate renderings from the authorized English version of the Scriptures, out of which it is impossible to evolve the spiritual sense either in this or in the other world. But these few instances we think are sufficient to show that in order to make a genuine translation of the Word of God it is absolutely necessary that the translators should be acquainted with the internal sense of the passages which they are translating, and, of course, that they should have a sufficient acquaintance with the doctrine of correspondences.

This knowledge was possessed in a super-eminent degree by Emanuel Swedenborg, but it was not possessed by the English translators employed in making what is known as King James's version, nor, so far as we know, is it possessed by those scholars who are now engaged in the Jerusalem Chamber at Westminster in revising King James's version. But as neither of these bodies was or is acquainted with the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture, and as not one of their number had or has a knowledge of correspondences which can in any way be compared

with that of Swedenborg, so neither can their version of the Scripture compare with Swedenborg's version. His translation was made with a single eye to the interior spiritual meaning of the Word of God, and therefore his version of Scripture, as it is scattered over his voluminous writings, ought to remain for ever the standard of our translation of the Scripture.

It is true his version is in Latin, and not in English ; but it is a comparatively easy work to prepare an English translation from the Latin. For Latin words have generally only one meaning, while in Hebrew we have sometimes to decide among half a dozen different meanings, all of which, from a philological point of view, are equally plausible and correct. Swedenborg himself uses on this subject the following language :—

(126.) "From this chapter and other prophetic writings of that time it may appear sufficiently clear that very many things are not expressed in the letter which yet are inmostly contained in its words. The reason is that the spirit who pronounces the Word beholds quite a number of things which cannot be expressed by [human] words ; and these things then fall into such expressions [as we find in the various prophetic writings] ; these expressions, however, are different with one prophet from what they are with another. I can testify how many things are contained in thought and speech when they are spiritual ; and that they can never be expressed [in natural language], and if expressed they would appear unconnected. For often one single spiritual idea requires a long exposition. The contents of the prophetic writing can, therefore, never be explained by any spirit or any man, but only by God-Messiah, who has spoken through the angels. As the words of Scripture, therefore, have such a wonderful origin, in order to make out some sense one translator construes the sentence differently from another translator. So that in a single verse as many meanings may be discovered as there are translators ; *the real meaning of the letter, however, appears from the inmost ;* and, consequently, from the connection of what precedes and follows" (*Adv.* iv. p. 66).

As the Word of God may be translated in so many fashions, we must be cautious therefore in placing our faith in any one translator, or in a whole company of translators, who lack that view "from the inmost" which Swedenborg declares is indispensable for making a genuine translation of the letter of the Word.

But as Swedenborg, on the contrary, has enjoyed this view of the Word of God "from the inmost," we have every reason to rest our faith upon him, and to regard his Latin translation of the Sacred Scripture, which is scattered over his theological writings, as our standard version of the Word of God. And we must condemn, in the strongest possible language, the practice which prevails with some of Swedenborg's translators of superseding his version of Scripture, in his own works, by the common English version. In Scripture those *who are on the roof of the house* are warned *not to come down to take anything out of the house*. But those who exchange a version of the Scripture which has been prepared with the complete knowledge of the internal sense, for one which has been prepared in a state of utter ignorance of that sense, certainly violate this injunction of the Lord in its spiritual signification.

A general condemnation, however, of the translations of Scripture which are in current use at the present time is contained in the following additional words of Swedenborg: "No one at the present day cares for anything except the merely literal sense of the Word, because mankind are in the last or ultimate, and in natural things even to such a point that they are altogether ignorant of spiritual things; wherefore the

translators of Scripture also are in a like state of persuasion, and *are little interested in translating the very words of the text from their original source*, as Schmi dius has done, but affect a mere elegance of style, as is the case with most. The very words [of Scripture] have thereby been changed into such as have a merely historical import, and they have thereby been deprived of all light, which dwells only in that sense which is to be evolved out of the very words of the Lord" (*Adv.* ii. 363). This, then, is a sufficient reason why we should have in the New Church our own translation of the Bible, based on Swedenborg's version of the original text.

This work is one of paramount importance for the New Church at the present day; for it is only by the letter of the Word that conjunction can be effected between heaven and earth, and not by the doctrines of the internal sense, independently of the letter. And not until we have a genuine translation of the letter of the Word will the New Jerusalem Church be able to be conjoined in fulness with the New Heaven, out of which all its strength, its life, and its light, descend.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH IN THEIR RELATION TO HUMAN FREEDOM.

ANOTHER objection to the Divine authority of the writings of the New Church is advanced by those who say that if we claim a Divine authority for the teachings contained in Swedenborg's theological writings, or if we claim a higher authority for his writings than for those of other writers on spiritual subjects, we expose ourselves to a charge of *dogmatism*, and coerce and limit the freedom of the members of the Church.

All those who believe the testimony of Swedenborg, and who believe that the Lord has effected His Second Coming through his instrumentality; all those, consequently, who believe that the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word of God, and hence that the doctrines or teachings of the New Jerusalem, are contained in Swedenborg's theological writings, are stigmatized by these persons as *dogmatists*, and they are charged as desiring to break down intellectual freedom in the Church.

"We, New Churchmen," says one of their exponents,¹ "must object to the attempt to claim for the

¹ Minutes of the New Church Conference, 1873, p. 38.

inferences which men [and among these men the writer includes Swedenborg] have drawn from their study of Scripture an almost Divine sanction and authority, or to press such inferences when formulated into Articles of Faith and Creeds as of equal obligation with the words of Scripture. . . . The principle which underlies all such dogmatism is even frightfully false—that men must not seek rationally to understand the dogmas of faith, but must accept them. . . . Against such dogmatism we must continually, and most strongly, protest.”

As a general protest against all merely dogmatic teaching on the part of the ministers and leaders of the Church, we fully agree with every word expressed here by the writer ; for Swedenborg himself warns us against the dangers of dogmatism in these words : “For those who are in an affirmative principle in respect to the Word, viz., that it is to be believed, it is injurious to hold that the teachings of faith are to be believed simply without any rational intuition, because every one may thus be deprived of freedom of thought, and his conscience may be bound even to the most egregious heresy, and both his internal and external may thus be ruled over by others” (*A. C.* 3394). There is therefore no doubt whatever that this writer is perfectly justified in declaring that “no man has dealt heavier blows against dogmatic teaching than Swedenborg” (p. 44), and that “there is not the slightest suspicion of dogmatism in this ‘servant of the Lord’ ” (p. 48).

Yet, while inveighing, on the one hand, against all those who claim a Divine sanction and authority for

the figments of their own reason and imagination in matters of the Church, Swedenborg, on the other, is most careful to place the Divine Truth revealed from God out of heaven beyond the arbitrament of human reason, and he insists most strongly that Divine Truth, or the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures, must not on any account be submitted to the scrutiny and judgment of human reason, but that it must be accepted as true and infallible by human reason, and be confirmed by rational, scientific, and sensual things.

While teaching, therefore, that it is wrong for one man to receive blindly the teachings of another man on spiritual things, Swedenborg nevertheless insists that human reason must bow to the utterances of God in the Sacred Scripture, and hence to the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, which are understood in the Book of Revelation by "the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven."

As the writer, however, as we have proved from p. 52 to p. 54, does not regard the teachings of Swedenborg, whom "the Lord filled with His Spirit to teach the doctrines of the New Church by the Word from Him," as Divine and infallible, he is logically compelled to regard his doctrines as mere "inferences which he drew from his study of Scripture;" and he, together with all who accept his views, regard those as dogmatists who, in accordance with *T. C. R.* 779, believe that the Lord has effected His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and who teach that the works which he wrote "as the Lord's servant" are on that account infallible and of Divine authority.

The general argument which the writer, on p. 38, has directed against all dogmatic teaching is directed by him also against those who maintain publicly that the contents of Swedenborg's theological writings are infallible and of Divine import, and the form in which he applies it to them is this :—

All those who urge that the teachings contained in Swedenborg's theological writings are "of equal obligation with the words of Scripture," acknowledge the principle that "men must not seek rationally to understand the dogmas of faith, but must accept them." He therefore maintains that the acknowledgment of the Divinity of the doctrines of the internal sense, or of the doctrines contained in Swedenborg's theological writings, is incompatible with the use of man's freedom and rationality. Let us hear the doctrine of the New Church on the subject :—

(127.) "The acknowledgment of what is Divine is the first thing ; for then an idea of holiness is present, which gives universal confirmation to each and everything that is said, *even though it be not comprehended*. Nevertheless, the things said must be accommodated to every one's understanding ; for it is not sufficient that man should know that a thing *is*, but he desires to know also what it is, and how it is, so that some confirmation may accrue thence to the intellectual part, and *vice versa* from the understanding to the subject treated of. Unless this is done a thing may be indeed committed to the memory, but it remains there scarcely otherwise than as a dead thing or a mere sound ; and unless some confirming proofs infix it, from whatever source they may be derived, the remembrance of anything will be dissipated like a mere sound" (*A. C.* 3388).

While Swedenborg, therefore, declares that the affirmation of what is Divine, and thus the acknowledgment of what is Divine as an authority, must come first, and rational thought afterwards, and hence,

while he declares that the acknowledgment of a truth as Divine, "even though it be not comprehended," is perfectly compatible with rational thought, this is denied by the writer, and he, moreover, declares that "the principle which underlies all such dogmatism is frightfully false." Again, Swedenborg says:—

(128.) "With doctrine the case is this; it becomes a nullity in proportion to the human, *i.e.* to the sensual, scientific, and rational from which it is believed to be so. But in proportion to the removal of what is sensual, scientific, and rational, *i.e.* in proportion as doctrine is believed without these, in the same proportion doctrine lives; for in the same proportion what is Divine flows in. The things belonging to what is human impede influx and reception. It is one thing to believe from what is rational, scientific, and sensual, or to consult them in order to cause belief, and another thing to confirm and corroborate what is believed by things rational, scientific, and sensual" (*A. C.* 2538).

While Swedenborg therefore teaches that "doctrine lives in proportion to the removal of what is sensual, scientific, and rational, *i.e.* in proportion as doctrine is believed without these," this writer maintains that "only so far as Scripture and rational thought establish in the mind of any man either the philosophy or the facts [of the spiritual world], does he [Swedenborg] require any one to believe, or does he justify any one in believing" (p. 48). Swedenborg continues:—

(129.) "Intellectual truth does not appear, *i.e.* is not acknowledged, until fallacies and appearances are dispersed, and these are not dispersed so long as man reasons concerning the very truths from sensual and scientific things; only when man believes from a simple heart that a thing is true because the Lord has said so, then only the shades of fallacies are dispersed with him, and it no longer matters to him whether he comprehend a thing or not" (*A. C.* 1911).

In reply to this the writer says (p. 47), "We must wish to understand somewhat of the process of generation by which the doctrines Swedenborg teaches came to exist in his mind, before we can be ready to accept many of them as subjects of meditation and research. But he does not require us to believe a single one of these dogmas, except so far as the scriptural and rational proof which he offers produces conviction in the mind. If he did he would prove false to his own justification of his mission. 'Now it is allowable to *enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith!*' We 'enter *intellectually* into the mysteries of faith' only so far as we rationally perceive and understand the truths that we believe."

Great stress is laid by all those who are unwilling to acknowledge the teachings of the internal sense as the law of the Church upon this quotation from the writings of the New Church, "Now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith;" so that it becomes a matter of consequence to know what is really meant by this passage. The whole of this passage reads as follows :—

(130.) "In the New Church it is allowed to enter and penetrate by the understanding into all its mysteries, and also to confirm them by the Word; because *its doctrines are continuous truths revealed by the Lord through the Word (a Domino per Verbum)*; and the confirmations of these doctrines by rational things have this effect, that the understanding is opened more and more above, and thus is elevated into the light in which are the angels of heaven; and this light in its essence is truth, and in this light the acknowledgment of the Lord as the God of heaven and earth shines in its glory. This is understood by *Nunc licet*, *i.e.* now it is permitted to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith" (T. C. R. 508).

Swedenborg teaches here that by *Nunc licet* is signified that "the doctrines of the New Church, which are *continuous truths revealed from the Lord by the Word*, are to be confirmed by rational things;" he teaches therefore that the doctrines of the New Church are to be believed first, and afterwards to be confirmed by rational considerations. But the writer says the meaning of *Nunc licet* is, that "not a single one of these dogmas is to be believed, except so far as the scriptural and rational proof which Swedenborg offers produces conviction in the mind;" with him rational thought or reason comes first, and doctrine last, and the effect of this is that he acknowledges only so much of the doctrines of the New Church, "which are continuous truths revealed from the Lord," to be true, as he is willing or able to comprehend with his reason.

The writer, it is true, speaks here of "scriptural" and "rational" proof, and in another place he says that "Scripture and rational thought establish in the mind the philosophy and the facts of the spiritual world" (p. 48). By "scriptural proof" and "Scripture" the author means here proof drawn from the letter of the Word. This he is willing to accept as his authority. Let us see what Swedenborg says in respect to the letter of the Word as a source of authority.

(131.) "He who is intelligent may know that the Word is most holy, and that its literal sense is holy from its internal sense, and that when it is separated from it it is not holy; for when this sense is separated from the internal it is like man's external separate from his internal, which is an image without life; and it is like the bark of a tree, of a flower, fruit, or seed without their internals, and it is like a foundation without a house. Wherefore, if any cling to the letter of the Word, and

have no doctrine, or if they do not provide for themselves a doctrine from the Word which agrees with its internal sense, they may be drawn into all sorts of heresies; wherefore the Word by such is called a book of heresies. Doctrine itself from the Word ought to shine before a man and to lead; but doctrine itself is taught by the internal sense, and he who knows that doctrine has the internal sense of the Word" (*A. C.* 10,276).

Again we read :—

(132.) "Those who read the Word without doctrine are in obscurity with respect to all truth, and their mind is vague and uncertain, prone to errors, and also inclined to heresies, which are also embraced when favour or authority prompt and reputation is not in danger" (*T. C. R.* 228).

(133.) "The literal sense may be turned in various directions, and be explained according to the comprehension" (*T. C. R.* 260; see also *T. C. R.* 207).

From this it follows that the letter of the Word without the doctrine of the internal sense may be bent by man in various directions, and that by means of it he may confirm thereby whatever he pleases; wherefore an appeal to the letter of the Word without appealing, at the same time, to the doctrines of the internal sense, and acknowledging them as authoritative, is equivalent to an acknowledgment of no authority, and of no criterion of the truth. On this account also an appeal to "scriptural and rational proof," when by the Scripture is understood the letter of the Word only, means an appeal to human reason, and nothing else.

If the writer should say that he does not deny the "*doctrines*" which are contained in Swedenborg's writings, and consequently that he does not deny "the doctrines of the internal sense," he still does not

admit them as a final authority, or as a law by which his own interpretation of the Scripture, and the findings of his reason, are to be governed: for he says expressly that these doctrines or dogmas are not to be believed "except so far as the scriptural and rational proof which Swedenborg offers produces conviction in the mind" (p. 47). With respect to some of the doctrines which Swedenborg teaches, he is not even willing "to accept them as subjects of meditation and research," before, as he says, "somewhat of the process of generation is understood by which these doctrines came to exist in his mind" (*Ibid.*).

It is very evident, therefore, that according to the writer not only the interpretation of the literal sense, but also the doctrines of the internal sense, are to be subjected to man's rational thought, and thus that human reason is the ultimate authority not only in all matters respecting the Church, but also respecting heaven and the Lord.

The question whether human reason is to be consulted in matters of faith has been treated at some length in Chapter IV.; but as the whole subject of authority and law in the Church is bound up in this question it is necessary to speak of it at greater length.

We have seen that the doctrines of the New Jerusalem were revealed by the Lord to mankind through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and that they were revealed through him by a process of internal inspiration. We have seen further that this internal inspiration was perfectly compatible with a state of freedom and rationality on the part of Swedenborg, and that while communicating to mankind the

results of his inspiration, he was in a state of freedom itself and rationality itself, by which he was enabled to perceive and understand clearly what he wrote, without his reason, on that account, interfering in the least with the Divine character of the doctrines promulgated through him. We shall now take a still higher and stronger ground, and prove from the writings of the New Church that it was absolutely impossible for Swedenborg's reason or for his rational thought to contribute anything whatever to the doctrines of the New Church. We read as follows :—

(134.) “There is no doctrine from the rational, because the rational is in the appearance of what is good and true ; and these appearances are not truths in themselves. Besides, below the rational are fallacies which are from external sensual things confirmed by scientifics, and these cause a shade in the appearances of the truth.

“The rational as to its greatest part is merely human, as may appear also from its nativity. On this account no doctrinal of faith can be derived from, and still less be based upon it ; but it must be from the very Divine of the Lord, and from His Divine Human. Such must be its origin, and even to such an extent that the Lord is Doctrine Itself ; wherefore also He is called in the Word, The Word, the Truth, the Light, the Way, and the Door. Besides, every doctrinal is from the Divine Good and the Divine Truth, and has within it the heavenly marriage, which is a mystery. The doctrinal which has not within it this marriage is not a genuine doctrinal of faith. Hence it is that in all the particulars of the Word, whence doctrine is, there is such a marriage. It seems, indeed, as if the doctrine of faith in the literal or external sense of the Word had many things from the rational, yea, from the natural ; but this is because the Word is for man, to whom it is accommodated ; but nevertheless in itself it is spiritual from a celestial origin, *i.e.* it is from Divine Truth conjoined with Divine Good” (*A. C.* 2196).

So also it seems as if there were many things from Swedenborg's rational and natural in the statement

of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem in his theological writings; yet to these writings also applies the language quoted here in connection with the letter of the Word; for these writings also "are for man, to whom they are accommodated;" but, nevertheless, the doctrinal contents of these writings in themselves are "spiritual from a celestial origin, *i.e.* they are from Divine Truth conjoined with Divine Good." Again we read:—

(135.) "In the doctrine of faith, rational truth is not consulted in any manner, because all the doctrinals of faith are from the Divine, which is infinitely above the human rational. From the Divine the rational receives its good and truth. The Divine may enter into the rational, but not *vice versa*; just as the soul can enter into the body and form it, but not the body into the soul; or as the light can enter into the shade and modify it into colours by various modes, but not shade into light" (*A. C.* 2519).

If the rational, however, has no share in the formation of doctrine, it is perfectly presumptuous for us to lay down a rule that nothing pertaining to doctrine is to be believed except in proportion as we can comprehend it with our rational thought; wherefore we read again:—

(136.) "With all Divine Truths it is thus, that if the rational be consulted concerning them they can never be believed; for they are above its comprehension. The rational ought not to be trusted, because it is in fallacies and appearances; wherefore it rejects truths which are denuded of fallacies and appearances; and this so much the more when man is in the love of self and in its lusts, and in the reasonings, as well as in the principles, of what is false concerning faith" (*A. C.* 1936). And we read further, "The rational is such that it can never comprehend Divine things; for it is finite, and this cannot comprehend those things which are infinite" (*A. C.* 3365). Yea, we read, "When the rational is consulted in the doctrine of faith this is destroyed" (*A. C.* 2519, 2520).

The doctrines of the New Church, therefore, are very far from teaching that man must not believe Divine Truth except so far as it agrees with human reason, or so far as it can be compassed by human reason ; yea, throughout these writings it is laid down as a first condition of faith, or of the building-up of the Church in man, that he should in an affirmative, and thus in a believing, spirit receive the doctrine of faith which was revealed from God out of heaven. We accordingly read as follows :—

(137.) “The beginning must not be from scientifics or matters of science, nor ought man to enter by them into the truths of faith ; for scientifics with man take their origin from the things of the senses, and thus from the world, from which there arise innumerable fallacies ; but the beginning must be made from the truths of faith” (*A. C.* 6047).

Again we read :—

(138.) “The first means by which the internal man is conjoined with the external, is an affirmative principle with regard to internal truth, viz., that it is so. When man is in an affirmative state he is in the beginning of regeneration : good from the internal operates and causes affirmation. This good cannot flow into a negative, nor even into a doubtful, state, until it becomes affirmative ; and this good afterwards manifests itself by affection, that is, by man’s becoming affected by truth, and beginning to be delighted with it ; first by knowing, and afterwards by doing it. For instance, unless the truth that the Lord is the salvation of the human race is made an affirmative principle by man, none of the things which he has learned respecting the Lord from the Word, or in the Church, and which are in the memory of his natural mind among scientifics, can be conjoined with his internal man ; that is, they cannot be conjoined with the things which in the internal man might be of faith ; hence affection cannot flow in, not even into the generals of that which is conducive to man’s salvation. But when the state of man is affirmative, then innumerable things are added, and are fitted by the good which flows in ; for good continually flows in from the Lord, but where there is no affirmative state it is not received. An affirmative principle,

therefore, is the first subservient means, and as it were the first dwelling-place for the good which flows in from the Lord. The same is the case with all the other truths which are called matters of faith" (*A. C.* 3913).

We see, therefore, that if a man desires to be regenerated by the Lord, or to have the Church built up within him, he must refrain from subjecting the truths of faith or the teachings of the Word of God to his own rational thought formed from the sensual, scientific, and philosophical things of this world; and that, on the contrary, he must endeavour to continue in an affirmative state in respect to these truths. The doctrine of the internal sense is so positive on this subject that it even declares those to be spiritually *drunken* who believe nothing but what they can thus comprehend, as appears clearly from the following passage:—

(139.) "Those are called *drunken* who believe nothing but what they comprehend, and who therefore investigate the mysteries of faith; and as this, according to the quality of the man, is done either from sensual, scientific, or philosophical things, it cannot be otherwise but that he should fall into errors. Man's thought is but earthly, corporeal, and material, because it is derived from earthly, bodily, and material things, which constantly adhere, and upon which the ideas of his thought are founded, and in which they terminate. Wherefore, when he thinks and reasons on Divine things from them, he is borne into errors and perversions, and it is as impossible to acquire faith thence as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The error and insanity thence are called *drunkenness* in the Word" (*A. C.* 1072).

Again we read:—

(140.) "It may be known to every one that man is ruled by the principles he adopts, even though they be most false; and also that all his science and all his reasoning favour these principles; for innumerable proofs present themselves, and man is thus confirmed in falsities. If, therefore, any one has assumed as a principle that he is not required

to believe until he see and understand, he will never believe ; because spiritual and celestial things cannot be seen with the eyes, nor grasped with the fantasy.

“ True order, however, is that a man should know or be wise from the Lord, *i.e.* from His Word ; then all things succeed in proper order, and then he is also illustrated in rational and scientific things. For man is never forbidden to learn the sciences, since they are useful and pleasant in life ; and he who is in faith is not at all prohibited from speaking as the learned do in the world ; he must do so, however, from this principle, that the Word of God ought to be believed, and that spiritual and celestial truths ought to be confirmed by natural truths, to the utmost of his ability, and indeed in terms familiar to the learned world. Wherefore a man’s principle must be from the Lord, and not from himself. The former is life, but the latter death ” (*A. C.* 129).

It is especially wrong to throw doubt upon the truths or doctrines of the internal sense, and thereby to question their authority. Doing so is regarded by some as a mark of superior intelligence and wisdom, while accepting the teachings of Divine Truth in an affirmative spirit, without questioning their authority, is considered by them as a sign of illiberality, and of weakness of intellect. Yet the way to wisdom is open only to him who studies revealed truth in an affirmative spirit, and it is closed against him who investigates it in a negative state (see No. 30), and who raises doubts on the plea that the doctrine is opposed to the appearances upon which his rational thought is based, or who condemns a truth unheard, because he denies that the man through whom the truth was communicated from the Lord to mankind was inspired. On this subject we read as follows :—

(141.) “ When experience is clear and certain [as in the case of Swedenborg’s mission], it ought not to be doubted because the appearance is different, and because the causes are not known ; as is the case

with many things in nature which are attested by experience and ought to be believed. As for instance, that it is possible to navigate around the globe, and even on the side opposite to our feet ; for this is certain, because proved by experience. Who in the world would doubt this, because there is a different appearance, and he does not know the cause? In this case there would be innumerable things in the nature of things which he could not believe, and which, nevertheless, are such.

“The case is exactly the same in the spiritual world, especially with the things of faith, which ought not to be doubted, and still less rejected, because we do not comprehend their causes, and because they are not in agreement with appearances. *These things are truths, because the Lord, who is Truth Itself, has spoken them* ; as for instance, that it is the Lord Himself who lives, and that all other lives in the earths and in the heavens are of no account, with other similar things. These things are also opposed to appearances, but yet they are true ; and they ought not to be denied, because we cannot understand them, and because it seems to us as if we lived from ourselves” (*S. D.* 2545).

Again we read :—

(142.) “The truth of a thing ought not to be controverted from causes or reasons ; and if no causes or no reasons can be found, the truth ought not on that account to be enfeebled or denied, as people are in the habit of doing ; but it ought to be believed because it is true. If any one desires to investigate its causes he is quite at liberty to do so, only if he does not find any causes, or if many things present themselves which he cannot solve, he ought not on that account to deny the truth. If, in the case of the things of nature, which we see with the eyes, and seize with our senses, we should deny all those for which no reasons are found, there would be no natural truth left in any of the kingdoms” (*S. D.* 2651).

The reason, however, why a man ought not to reason from himself respecting the truths of faith, and why he ought not to raise doubts respecting them is, because all such reasonings and all such doubts proceed from a denial of these truths at heart, as is clearly proved by the following passages :—

(143.) “Those who had commenced reasoning [from themselves; compare *D. P.* 219] respecting the things which pertain to spiritual and celestial life, or the things which are of faith, were perceived to be in a state of doubt, yea, of denial : *for reasoning* [from one’s-self] *concerning faith is doubting and denying*. And because they do so from themselves or from *proprium*, they fall into mere falsities, and hence into an abyss of darkness, *i.e.* of falsities. When they are in such an abyss the least scruple prevails over a thousand truths, and this scruple is then like a particle of dust placed before the pupil of the eye, which prevents the universe, and everything in the universe, from being seen” (*A. C.* 215; see also *S. D.* 3611).

Swedenborg has again and again protested against the pernicious practice of raising objections and doubts as to the truths of faith or the doctrines of the Word. In addition to what we have adduced from *A. C.* 6749 in No. 35, he says :—

(144.) “I conversed with spirits concerning those who frame objections to the knowledges of faith, and I stated that this is an indication that they are in a state of doubt and denial; wherefore no objections ought to be formed, because they are doubts and negations. For a thousand books may be filled with objections; wherefore confirmations only ought to be assumed as means of introduction. Those in heaven are of such a quality that they love only confirmations and reject objections; they do so also because objections are indefinite, and because thus scarcely anything can be known, even of such things as are in lowest nature” (*S. D.* 3602).

The advantage resulting to the members of the Church from discarding all objections and doubts respecting the truths of faith, and hence respecting the teachings of the internal sense, is clearly set forth by Swedenborg in what follows :—

(145). “*Those who do not admit objections respecting the knowledges of faith are secure from evil spirits.*

“Some spirits complained that they could no longer be present with me because I remained in the knowledges of faith, and they were for-

bidden to advance objections. They said that thus they had nothing by which to lead, and they added likewise, nothing by which to seduce; for chiefly by such things they seduce men. In the presence of one objection, confirming truths, no matter how many they may be, are of no account; for man is then led by his lusts, which produce fantasies, and which gladly admit objections; yea, one single objection with man is then more powerful than a thousand confirmations. In order that man may be in the truth or in true faith, he must therefore assume the opposite position, and declare that one truth is worth more than thousands and myriads of objections; in that case also evil spirits are put to flight, because they cannot live in such a sphere" (*S. D.* 3614).

But in the face of this overwhelming testimony of Swedenborg showing that human reason has no share in the formation of the doctrine of faith, and that therefore doctrine ought to be believed first, and afterwards confirmed by rational, scientific, and sensual considerations, the authority of Swedenborg is invoked in support of the following position:¹—
 "Swedenborg's aversion to *dogmatism* is strikingly shown in the way in which he opposes the mind-numbing notion that the reason is to be kept in subordination to the teachings of faith. On the contrary, he teaches that men can truly believe only that which they are able to intellectually see to be true. He says that the angels would reprove any one who desired them to receive as true what he might state on the mere ground that he so stated it: 'Make us to see that it is true and then we will believe it!' He enforces the teachings of the Saviour that the seeds sown on the wayside, which the fowls pick up, represent 'those truths that are *sown in the memory, but which are not understood.*' Hence one of his com-

¹ Minutes of General Conference, 1873, p. 45.

monest phrases is 'the truths of faith,' that is, truths seen, understood, and believed. . . . Thus he not only warrants investigation, but even provokes it, and pronounces the human intelligence to be free from the old fetters of an unreasoning faith, the blindfold acceptance of whatsoever the Church may have taught."

In order to reconcile the statements attributed here to Swedenborg with those which we have hitherto quoted from his writings, it becomes necessary that we should have before us the exact words used in these writings themselves. We read there:—

(146.) "Spiritual truths may be comprehended just as well as natural truths; and if not so clearly, still upon being heard they fall into the perception whether they are true or not, and this principally with those who are affected with truths. . . . Spiritual things may be comprehended, because man as to his understanding may be elevated into the light of heaven, in which none but spiritual things appear, which are truths of faith; for the light of heaven is spiritual light.

"Hence then it is that those who are in the spiritual affection of truth are in the internal acknowledgment of the truth. And as the angels are in that affection, they totally reject the dogma that the understanding is under the obedience of faith. For they say, What is a belief without seeing whether a thing is true? And if any one says that we ought still to believe, they answer: 'Do you consider yourself God, whom I ought to believe, or do you think me so insane as to believe an assertion in which I do not see any truth? Cause me to see the truth.' Then that dogmatist retreats" (*D. F.* 3, 4).

The teaching of the New Church on the subject of *the seed sown by the wayside* is as follows: It signifies "truth from the Word received simply in the memory, and not in the life" (*A. C.* 1940); further, "truths received only by the corporeal sensual degree, and not more interiorly" (*A. E.* 630). And finally:—

(147.) "Unless the rational submits itself to the goods and truths of the Lord, then the rational either suffocates, rejects, or perverts the things that flow in, and still more if they flow into the sensual scientifics of the memory. This is meant by the seed *falling by the wayside*, on stony ground, or among thorns (Matt. xiii. 3-7; Mark iv. 3-7; Luke viii. 5-7). But when the rational submits itself, and believes the Lord, that is, His Word, then the rational is like the good ground, into which the seed falls, and bears much fruit" (*A. C.* 1940).

With respect to "the truths of faith," the writings say in a general way that they are the truths belonging to the various doctrines of faith (see *A. C.* 2053, and other passages). Again, they say, "'truths of faith' have reference in the first place to charity as their ultimate end, and subsequently they proceed from charity as from their first end" (*A. C.* 7778); further, "truths which have not respect to good are not 'truths of faith'" (*A. C.* 9603). Finally we read:—

(148.) "Those have not 'the truth of faith' who believe that they have faith from themselves, and thus who think that they are wise from themselves; but 'the truth of faith' belongs to those who believe from the Lord; for to these faith and wisdom are granted, because they do not attribute to themselves any truth nor any good" (*A. C.* 4007).

We see therefore that, according to the teachings of our Church, a truth is said to be "sown by the wayside" when it is received simply in the understanding or in the memory, and not in the will; and we learn further, that a truth is said "to fall by the wayside" when the man of the Church refuses to submit his reason to the goods and truths of the Lord, *i.e.* to the teachings of the Word of God. And we learn again that a truth becomes "a truth of

faith" when it has respect to charity, *i.e.* when it is obeyed by man; and further, that those only have "the truth of faith" who believe from the Lord, and not from themselves, *i.e.* who see the truth in the light of heaven, and not in the light of nature, or in the light of their own finite reason. We see, therefore, that the writings themselves do not warrant the employment of these passages or examples in order to prove the superiority of human reason over the teachings of God, or over the doctrines of the internal sense of the Sacred Scripture.

Again, from the passages quoted in No. 146 it appears that spiritual truths are not above man's comprehension: that it is possible, therefore, for man to obtain a rational idea of spiritual things, and hence of the truths of faith. Yea, we learn that the angels refuse altogether to receive a thing communicated to them by another unless they first see whether it be true. Does this perhaps favour the idea that the reason of angels and of men is above the truths of faith, and that no member of the Church ought to believe a truth of the Word of God, or a doctrine of the internal sense which the Lord revealed to mankind through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, without first comprehending whether it is true? This passage simply teaches that the angels are willing to believe "God," and hence the doctrines drawn from the Word of God, but that they are not willing to believe an assertion of the truth made by a finite angel or spirit unless "he cause them to see the truth."

The angels, therefore, make a distinction between a

doctrine taught by God and a doctrine taught by finite human beings. The former they regard as infallible and authoritative, but the latter not; and they are only willing to accept the latter when the person teaching it "causes them to see its truth." Such a distinction ought also to be made by the men of the Church on earth. While yielding an implicit obedience to God, and hence to all doctrine revealed from God out of heaven; while, therefore, accepting all Divine Truth as authoritative, they ought to challenge every assertion of the truth, whether made by laymen or priests, whenever they seek to impose upon them the dogma that "the understanding is to be kept under the obedience of faith," *i.e.* whenever they maintain that a thing taught by them ought to be believed, without their hearers first examining whether the thing thus taught is true. And should any one still insist on an acceptance of his dogmatic teaching, the members of the Church ought to answer him in the language of the angels, quoted in No. 146, "Do you consider yourself God, whom I ought to believe, or do you think me so insane as to believe an assertion in which I do not see any truth? Cause me to see the truth!"

We are, therefore, just as much opposed to dogmatic preaching in the Church as the writer whose opinions we have quoted in these pages. But we hold that a distinction ought to be made between doctrine revealed from God out of heaven and doctrine as received and established by men; and while we maintain, in accordance with the writings of the New Church, that Divine authority ought to be

attributed to the former, and that it should be declared superior to reason; the latter is plainly subject to human reason, and we hold that it is incumbent upon the members of the Church to examine all such doctrine in the light of revealed truth, in order to see how much of it is true, and how much false.

This distinction is not made by the writer in question, for he holds that all doctrine is man-made, and subject to the frailties of human reason; "the only exception," according to him, being "in the case of *personal and plenary inspiration*, in which the writer is no more than an amanuensis of the Divine Wisdom, the very words which he records being the very words of the Lord. Such," he says, "was the inspiration of the Word, but to which no addition will ever be made."¹

¹ See Chap. VI. p. 46.

CHAPTER IX.

DOCTRINE TWOFOLD, OF GOD AND OF MEN.

FROM the concluding parts of the preceding chapter it appears that doctrine is twofold ; and that doctrine as it is revealed from God out of heaven is separate and distinct from doctrine as it is digested in the minds of men and interpreted by them. The former, we hold, is of Divine authority, and superior to human reason, while the latter comes plainly within the jurisdiction of human reason, and is to be examined in the light of revealed truth, in order to see whether it is true or false.

This distinction, as we have seen, is ignored in the Church by some of its members ; and while some of them maintain that all doctrine, including that revealed to us through Swedenborg, is subject to all those imperfections, from which none of the works of men are exempt, others err on the opposite side, and maintain, on the strength of some passages in the writings of the New Church, that infallible doctrine of Divine authority may be found not only in the writings of Swedenborg, but that such doctrine may also be deduced from the Word of God by such men as are in good, or as are regenerated. Such men,

they say, by virtue of the good in which they are, have the faculty of perceiving in the Word the truth or doctrine corresponding to their good without first having been taught it.

The passages from the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, on which they base themselves, are as follows :—

(149.) “The Word in the letter can be comprehended only by means of doctrine which has been made from the Word by one who is illustrated” (*H. D.* 254).

(150.) “Doctrine ought to be collected from the Word, and while it is being collected man must be in illustration from the Lord ; and he is in illustration when he is in the love of truth for the sake of truth, and not for the sake of himself and the world. These are they who are illustrated in the Word when they read it, and they see the truth, and make to themselves doctrine thence” (*A. C.* 9424).

From these passages it would seem as if all who are “in the love of the truth for the sake of the truth, and not for the sake of themselves and the world,” could be brought into a state similar to that of Swedenborg, and as if they could likewise become media for the revelation of genuine doctrine from the Word to mankind.

In Chapter VI., Nos. 55 and 113, we have shown that Swedenborg’s state was a peculiar one, and that no one from the beginning of the world up to his time had been like him, and that prospectively no one would ever come again into a similar state ; and, indeed, because the Lord once for all effected His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and it is nowhere stated in the Word that the Lord would supplement His Second Coming, or would effect a third coming.

From this position, however, it follows that the doctrine revealed by the Lord through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, differs *in toto* from the doctrine which such as "are in the love of truth for the sake of truth" are able to make to themselves from the Word. And from this it is clear again that the words "doctrine" and "doctrinal" are used in the writings of the New Church in a twofold sense, and that the difference between these two kinds of doctrine, or doctrinals, is as great as between what is human and what is Divine.

The doctrine of the internal sense, as revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming, is absolute Divine Truth accommodated to the rational understanding of men; and the descent of that doctrine out of heaven is equivalent to the revelation of Divine Truth itself. This Divine Truth, or this Divine doctrine, was revealed by the Lord in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg for the benefit of the Church of the New Jerusalem.

That such is the case we have endeavoured to show in Chapter II., and also the whole of Chapter VI. tends to prove this position.

That the Lord effected His Second Coming, once for all, through Emanuel Swedenborg, is taught in the following passages:—*T. C. R.* 779 (Nos. 6 and 7); *A. R.* 820 (No. 12); *Sketch of Ecclesiastical History*, etc., Photo-lithographed MSS., vol. viii. p. 1 (No. 13).

That the doctrines revealed through the instrumentality of Emanuel Swedenborg are represented in the Sacred Scripture by the Holy City, New Jeru-

saalem, descending out of heaven, may be seen from *Coronis*, 18 (No. 11); *A. R.* 820 (No. 12); *H. D.* 7 (No. 27); and the superscriptions to *T. C. R.* 779 and 781, read in consecutive order (No. 7).

That Swedenborg declares unequivocally that the writings which he published as the Lord's servant are not his own, but the Lord's writings, may be seen from the following passages:—*A. C.* 6597 (No. 9); *Sketch of Ecclesiastical History*, etc., p. 1 (No. 10); *S. D.* III. Part ii. p. 205 (No. 107).

That the doctrines of the New Church, finally, which were communicated to the world through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, are absolute Divine Truth, is declared by him in *T. C. R.* 508 (No. 117), where he maintains that "these doctrines are continuous truths revealed by the Lord through the Word."

If now we consider these statements in connection with what Swedenborg declares in No. 55, viz., that the revelation made through him was peculiar, and that "this has not been granted to any one since the creation, as it has been to him," it becomes our duty to determine how all these statements are to be reconciled with those made by him in *H. D.* 254, *A. C.* 9424 (Nos. 149, 150), and in other places, where we read that "doctrine from the Word is to be made by one who is illustrated," and that "those are illustrated, and make to themselves doctrine from the Word," who are "in the love of truth for the sake of truth, and not for the sake of themselves and the world." From these passages it would seem to follow as if other persons also, provided they be in a state of

illustration, may serve as media for the revelation of the doctrines of the internal sense to mankind.

In the first place, then, it must be borne in mind that as "the Word of the Lord is a dead letter, until it is vivified in the mind of the reader by the Lord" (*A. C.* 1776), so also the doctrines of the internal sense, which have been revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, are "a dead letter," until they are "vivified by the Lord" in the minds of the members of the Church.

Doctrine, therefore, can become a power and an authority in the Church only in proportion as it is established in the minds of the members of the Church, or, in other words, in proportion as it is understood and acknowledged by the members of the Church.

This establishment of doctrine in the minds of men, we hold, Swedenborg had in view, where he says, "The Word in the letter can be comprehended only by means of doctrine which has been made from the Word by one who is illustrated" (*H. D.* 254); and again, "Doctrine ought to be collected from the Word; and while it is being collected man must be in illustration from the Lord; and he is in illustration when he is in the love of truth for the sake of truth, and not for the sake of himself and the world. These are they who are illustrated in the Word when they read it, and they see the truth, and make to themselves doctrine thence" (*A. C.* 9424).

We hold that by the Word, from which those who are in illustration "make to themselves doctrine," or

whence they “collect doctrine,” is not meant here the mere letter of the Word, which is commonly understood by the Bible, but that there are meant thereby as well the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, which are contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, and which are identical with the doctrines of the internal sense, yea, which are the internal sense of the Word in a form accommodated to the understanding of men in this world.

That Swedenborg in speaking of the Word means thereby not only the letter of the Word, which is called the Bible, but also the doctrine of the internal sense, is proved by the following points :—

First, *The letter of the Word is as its body ; the spiritual sense as its soul.*

(151.) “The Word is as a Divine Man ; the literal sense is as it were its body, and the internal sense as it were its soul. It hence appears that the literal sense lives through the internal. It seems as if the literal sense vanishes or dies through the internal sense ; but the very reverse is true, it does not vanish or die through, but it lives through the internal sense” (*A. C.* 8943).

(152.) “The spiritual sense lives in the literal sense, as man’s spirit in his body, and the spiritual sense also in like manner continues to live when the literal sense perishes ; wherefore the internal sense may be called *the soul of the Word*” (*A. C.* 4857).

(153.) “The internal sense in respect to the literal sense is as the internal or celestial and spiritual things with man are in respect to his external or natural and corporeal things. His interiors are in the light of heaven ; his exteriors in the light of the world. Between the light of heaven and the light of the world there is the same difference as between the light of day and the shade of night.

“As man is in this shade, and is not willing to know that light is in the truth from the Lord, he cannot believe otherwise than that this shade is light ; yea, *vice versa*, that light is shade ; for he is like an owl, which, when it flies about in the shade of night, thinks it is in

light ; but when it flies in the light of day it supposes that it is in shade. For the internal eye, *i.e.* the understanding by which he sees interiorly, is formed with him in precisely the same way, because he has not formed it differently. He opens it when he looks downwards, *i.e.* towards worldly and bodily things, and closes it when he looks upward, *i.e.* towards spiritual and celestial things.

“The Word with these is similarly constituted ; what appears in its literal sense they believe to be in light, what in the internal sense in shade. For the Word appears to every one according to his quality ; when yet the internal sense in respect to the external is as the light of heaven in respect to the light of the world (Nos. 3086, 3108), *i.e.* as the light of day in respect to the light of night.

“In the internal sense are singulars, myriads of which make one particular, which is presented in the literal sense ; or what is the same thing, in the internal sense are particulars, myriads of which make one general, which is in the literal sense. This general appears to man, but not the particulars which are in it, and compose it. And yet the order of the particulars appears to man in the general, but according to his quality. This order is the holiness by which he is affected” (*A. C.* 3438).

Secondly, *The internal sense is the essential Word of God.*

(154.) “The internal sense is the soul of the Word, and is the very Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord ; thus it is the Lord Himself” (*A. C.* 9349).

(155.) “The internal sense is the most essential Word (*ipsissimum Verbum*) in which is the Divine most immediately” (*A. C.* 3432).

(156.) “The internal sense is the sanctuary of the Word” (*A. C.* 5398).

(157.) “The internal sense is the Word itself. The spiritual and celestial things of the Word are those treating of the Lord, His kingdom, and the Church ; while the things of the literal sense for the most part are worldly, corporeal, and earthly things, which can never constitute the Word of God” (*A. C.* 1540).

(158.) “The internal sense is the Lord’s Word in the heavens ; those in the heavens perceive it in that sense. When man is in the truth, *i.e.* in the internal sense, then he can make one with those in heaven as to

thought; although man is in the most general and obscure idea respectively" (*A. C.* 2094).

Thirdly, *The Word as to its mere letter is dead; it is the spiritual sense which imparts life to it*; see *A. C.* 3 (No. 14), and also the following passage:—

(159.) "To every intelligent man it may be known that there is an internal sense in which is the life of the Word; which life is not in the letter; this without the internal sense is dead" (*A. C.* 755).

If now Swedenborg teaches that the internal sense is the soul, and the literal sense the body of the Word; and if he further teaches that the internal sense is the real Word of God, and that the letter without the internal sense is dead, it follows that when he speaks of the Word, he means by it not the mere letter or the merely literal sense of the Word, but he includes therein also the spiritual sense of the Sacred Scripture, as this was revealed by the Lord at His Second Coming in the theological writings which Swedenborg wrote and published as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it follows further that when he says that "doctrine ought to be collected from the Word," and that it may be "collected by those who are in a state of illustration," he means thereby that doctrine ought to be "made" or "collected" by the men of the Church not only from the letter or the literal sense of the Word, but also from the doctrine of the internal sense as this is contained in the theological writings of our Church; and that in doing so they must be in a state of illustration from the Lord.

That in the Church of the New Jerusalem, to be established at the Lord's Second Coming, doctrine is

to be collected not from the sense of the letter, but from the spiritual sense, is clearly taught by Swedenborg in the following passage:—

(160.) “Before the Church is fully devastated the interior Word is revealed, *i.e.* according to the spiritual sense; because then a New Church will be instituted, into which those of the former Church are invited, and *for the New Church interior Divine Truth is revealed*, which could not be revealed before. The same has taken place now as took place at the end of the Jewish Church; for at its end, which was when the Lord came into the world, the Word was interiorly opened; for interior Divine Truths were revealed by the Lord while He was in the world, which were to be of service to the New Church then about to be established by Him, and which also did such service. At the present day, for similar reasons, the interior Word has been opened, and Divine Truths of a still more interior nature have been thence revealed, *which are to be of service to the New Church*, which will be called the New Jerusalem” (*A. E.* 948).

By “being of service to the New Church” is meant, that “the interior Divine Truths which have been revealed for the New Church,” and which are contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, will be “collected” and “formed into doctrines” for the use of the Lord’s New Church by those of its members who “love the truth for the sake of truth,” and hence are able to be in a state of illustration from the Lord.

That for the special benefit of those who will be of the New Church, which is called the New Jerusalem, the internal sense has been discovered, and this through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, is further taught in the following passage:—

(161.) “It is given to the men of the New Church, which is called the New Jerusalem, to behold the Divine Truths which are in the Word, not sensually, *i.e.* not according to appearances, but spiritually,

i.e. according to essences. For this reason the internal sense of the Word, which is spiritual, *has been discovered, and solely for those who will be of that Church.* From this sense the Divine Truth appears such as it is in its spiritual light, and from this light such as Divine Truth is in natural light. Divine Truth is the Word, and those who are of that Church are illustrated from the spiritual light of the Word by influx from the Lord out of heaven; on account of their acknowledging the Divine in the Lord's human, and because they are in the spiritual affection of truth from Him. By these, *and by none other*, the spiritual light is received which flows in constantly from the Lord by heaven with all those who read the Word; hence is their illustration. . . .

"All who are of that Church have the understanding illustrated, by virtue whereof they are able to see the truth from the light of truth, that is, they are able to see whether a thing be true or not; and inasmuch as they thus see the truth, they acknowledge it, and receive it in the affection which is of the will, whence truths with them become spiritual, and hence the spiritual mind, which is above the natural mind, is opened with them; and being opened, it receives angelic sight, which is the sight of truth from its own inherent light" (*A. E.* 759).

From the fact that Swedenborg in this passage uses the past tense, and says that "the internal sense of the Word, which is spiritual, *has been discovered*," it follows that, according to Swedenborg's testimony, the Lord once for all revealed the spiritual sense of His Holy Word through the instrumentality of Emanuel Swedenborg; and although we learn that "those who will be of the New Church will be in a state of illustration from the Lord while reading the Word," still this illustration, as we further read, enables them only "to see the truth from the light of truth," *i.e.* they are able to see whether a thing is true or not. This illustration also enables them "to collect," or "to make for themselves doctrine," while studying the writings of the New Church; but it does not enable them to extract from the literal sense of

the Word the doctrine of the internal sense ; for this doctrine has been revealed by the Lord Himself at His Second Coming, once for all, through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, and concerning this doctrine the Lord says in the Book of Revelation (xxii. 18), " For I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any one shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

From the above, when read in conjunction with what has been adduced on the subject of illustration (pp. 83 to 89), it appears very plainly that there is no basis in the writings of the New Church for the assertion that the Lord will reveal from the Word new truths, or new doctrines, to such members of the Church as are in good, or as are in an advanced state of regeneration. That the Lord will not reveal any new doctrines or truths to those of the New Church who are of a *celestial genius* or disposition, follows from the simple consideration that the whole of mankind in Europe and America, among whom the Lord is establishing His New Church at the present day, are of a spiritual, and no longer of a celestial, genius.¹ That they are of a spiritual genius, because since the days of the flood the will-faculty of mankind has not been in a state of integrity, but inclined to the loves of self and of the world, appears clearly from the following teaching of our Church :—

(162.) " There are two Churches in general, viz., the celestial and

¹ See *S. D.* 5518, where we read as follows : " The Africans on our globe are of the same genius as the angels of the celestial kingdom ; the Europeans, however, are of a spiritual genius."

the spiritual. The celestial Church is with the man who can be regenerated or become a Church as to his will-part ; and the spiritual Church is with the man who can be regenerated only as to his intellectual part.

“ The Most Ancient Church, which was before the flood, was *celestial*, because the will-part of those with whom it existed was in some integrity ; but the Ancient Church, which was after the flood, was *spiritual*, because they were in a state of integrity not as to their will, but as to their intellectual part.

“ That the understanding, or the intellectual part, is regenerated with those who are of the spiritual Church, may appear also from this consideration, that the man of that Church *has no perception of truth from good*, as is the case with those of the celestial Church, but must first learn the truth of faith, and imbue his understanding therewith, and thus must learn to know what is good from truth, and after knowing it from truth, he may think about it and afterwards will, and finally do it ; and then a new will is formed in his intellectual part by the Lord, and by this the spiritual man is raised by the Lord into heaven, *while evil still remains in his will* ; but this is then miraculously separated, and indeed by a higher power, by which he is withheld from evil and kept in good.

“ The man of the celestial Church, however, was regenerated as to his will-part, by imbibing from infancy the good of charity, and after acquiring the perception of that good, he was led into the perception of love to the Lord. All the truths of faith appeared thence in the intellectual part as in a mirror. With him the understanding and the will made entirely one mind, for they perceived in their understanding what was in their will. In this consisted the integrity of the first man, by whom the celestial Church is understood ” (A. C. 5113).

That everything Swedenborg said concerning the ancient Church applies also to the succeeding Churches, and thus that the Jewish and Christian Churches were spiritual, and not celestial Churches, appears from the following passages :—

(163.) “ Those who were of the Most Ancient Church did not care for these externals [*i.e.* for such as were in the Ancient Church], because they were internal men, and because with them the Lord flowed in by an internal way, and [thus] taught them what was good. The varieties

and distinctions of good with them were in the place of truths, and hence they knew what each and everything in the world represented in the Lord's kingdom; for the universal world, or universal nature, is a representative theatre of the kingdom of God.

"But those of the Ancient Church were not internal, but external men; the Lord therefore could not flow in with them by an internal, but by an external way, and [thus] teach them what is good, and indeed, in the first place, by such things as were representative and significative; and afterwards by the doctrinals of goodness and truth which were represented and signified—whence the Christian Church arose.

"This Church, viz., the *Christian Church*, in its essence is the same as to internal form with the representative Church; but after the Lord came into the world the representatives and significatives of the former Church were abrogated, because each and everything represented Him, and consequently the things of His kingdom; for these are from Him, and are, so to speak, Himself.

"Between the Most Ancient and the Christian Churches [and hence between the celestial and the spiritual Churches] there is, however, the same difference as between the light of the sun by day and the light of the moon or of the stars by night; for seeing goods by an internal or prior way is like seeing in the day from the light of the sun, but seeing by an external or posterior way is like seeing at night from the light of the moon or of the stars" (*A. C.* 4489).

Again we read:—

(164.) "If the man of the *Most Ancient Church* had read the historical or prophetic Word, he would, without any previous instruction, and without any explanation at all, have seen its internal, and even to such an extent, that the celestial and spiritual things of the internal sense would have come up at once, and scarcely anything of the literal sense: the internal sense would thus have been in clearness, and the sense of the letter in obscurity. It would have been like one hearing another speak and paying attention only to his meaning, and not to his words.

"But if a man of the *Ancient Church* had read the Word, he could not have seen the internal without previous instruction or explanation; consequently with him the internal sense would have been in obscurity, and the literal sense in clearness; thus it would have been like one hearing another speak, and in his thought cleaving to his words, and not paying any attention to the sense, which would hence be lost.

“ But when a man of the *Jewish Church* reads the Word, he apprehends nothing but the sense of the letter, and does not know, nay, he even denies, that there is an internal sense.

“ The same is the case with the man of the *Christian Church* at the present day” (*A. C.* 4493).

From all this it appears that the descendants of the men of the Christian Church, among whom the New Jerusalem Church is being established at the present day, are of a spiritual, and not of a celestial, genius ; that they are, therefore, in a state of integrity as to their understanding, but not as to their will, and that hence they have to be taught the whole of the doctrine of the Church, and thus everything pertaining to an interior understanding of the Word, by a posterior way or by study from without, and that they are not in a condition to be “ taught of God,” like the men of the Most Ancient or celestial Church.

We readily admit that in the spiritual Church also there are such as are *relatively* of a celestial disposition ; even as we read that in each heaven, and thus also in the second or spiritual heaven, there are internal and external angels, the former being like the will-faculty, and thus relatively of a celestial disposition, and the latter being like the intellectual faculty, and thus relatively of a spiritual disposition (see *H. H.* 32). And again we read, “ There are three heavens ; the first is the abode of good spirits, the second of angelic spirits, and the third of angels, all of whom, as well the spirits as the angelic spirits and angels, are distinguished into two orders, celestial and spiritual ” (*A. C.* 459).

There are hence even in the spiritual Church some

who are relatively of a celestial, and others who are relatively of a spiritual, genius; yet both the former and the latter, at the present day, as to their will-faculty are instinct with evil, and hence have lost the capacity of being enlightened by the Lord from within. In this sense is to be understood what Swedenborg says (*H. H.* 333) respecting infants in heaven, that "some are of the genius by which the spiritual angels are distinguished, and some of the genius by which the celestial angels are distinguished."

We are likewise aware that Swedenborg in several places declares that the Church of the New Jerusalem will not only be of a spiritual, but also of a celestial character. So he says (*A. R.* 43), that "in that Church there will also be truths of a celestial origin," and (*A. R.* 350), that "celestial love, which is love to the Lord, will be with all who will be in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church;" and (*A. R.* 362), that "in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church there will only be such as are celestial and spiritual." Still all these passages do not remove the fact that all descendants of Christian parents as to their will-parts are instinct with hereditary evil, and hence are no longer in a state of integrity as to their wills, wherefore they are incapable of being taught the truth by the Lord from within. For this very reason also the Lord teaches them Divine Truth by an external channel, even by the written Word of God; while with those who are not only relatively, but *absolutely* of a celestial genius, as was the case with the men of the Most Ancient Church, the Word was written on their hearts, *i.e.* they were taught by the Lord by revela-

tions from within. The very fact therefore that New Churchmen at the present day need for their instruction the written Word of God, proves absolutely that they are not of a celestial, but of a spiritual genius, and hence have to be taught Divine Truth by instruction from without.

Again, we believe that the Church of the New Jerusalem will be the crown of all preceding Churches, and hence will bear not only a spiritual, but also a celestial character. But this celestial character can only be attained after it has for ages cultivated a spiritual character ; even as the seventh day of rest, by which is represented the celestial state, can only be reached after Christians of the New Dispensation have successfully passed through their six days of labour, and have, by the truths of the Word, spiritually understood, entirely overcome not only their actual, but also their hereditary evils.

The aim of all the members of the New Church should be to reach the glorious day of rest, and thus to acquire a celestial character ; yet very few will be able to reach that state in the natural world, especially during the first ages of the New Church, for that Church, as we are taught, "in the beginning will be external" (*A. E.* 403), and instead of being in spiritual or celestial good, it will be merely in natural good (see *A. C.* 4231). But as to the statement that "celestial love, which is represented by *Judah*, will be with all in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church" (*A. R.* 350), this must needs be the case, because all love, as it penetrates from the Lord to those in the New Heaven and the New Church,

passes through the heaven represented by Judah, and puts on its nature.

From these considerations it follows that, on the strength of the passages quoted in Nos. 136 and 137, we are by no means justified in assuming that infallible doctrine for the government of the Lord's New Church is contained not only in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, but may be deduced also from the letter of the Word by such "as are in good," or in an advanced state of regeneration, and as partake more or less of a celestial disposition.

Let us direct our attention now to the establishment of doctrine in the minds of men.

Doctrine which is revealed from the Lord out of heaven, when received by the men of the Church, first enters into their minds as a sensuous impression, then it becomes a scientific or a matter of knowledge, and, finally, as they progress in the path of regeneration, it becomes doctrine with them.

This progress of doctrine in human minds is described in the writings of the New Church as follows :—

(165.) "The first truths with man are sensuous, the second scientific, and the third *doctrinal*. These latter truths are founded on scientific truths ; for man cannot have, nor retain, any idea, notion, or conception of them except from scientifics ; scientific truths, however, are founded on sensuous truths ; for scientifics cannot be comprehended by man without these sensuous truths. Before a man, therefore, is of adult age, and before he is by sensuous and scientific in doctrinal truths, he cannot be regenerated ; for he cannot be confirmed in the truth of doctrinals except by ideas drawn from scientifics and the things of the senses ; since nothing ever exists with man in his thoughts, even with regard to the most hidden thing of faith, which has not some natural and sensuous idea in it, although man for the most part is ignorant of it" (*A. C.* 3310). "Scientifics and doctrinals, or matters of knowledge and of

doctrine, are distinct from each other in this, that doctrinals are derived from scientifics ; the former having respect to use, and being procured by reflection from scientifics " (*A. C.* 3052).

If we consult the writings of our Church still more closely, we find that the things that enter by the senses, or sensuous impressions, are stored up in the corporeal memory, and that man thence concludes respecting the scientifics which repose in the natural mind (see *A. C.* 5774, 4038, 3020); but concerning the doctrinals, or the matters of doctrine, which are "procured from scientifics by reflection," we learn that they "have respect to rational things ; because the rational mind receives and acknowledges them" (*A. C.* 3365).

Yet doctrinals, or matters of doctrine, are derived from scientifics not simply by a process of reflection, as appears clearly from the following statement :—

(166.) "Doctrinals are conclusions from scientifics ; but they are not doctrinals before they are believed [*i.e.* before they become matters of faith]; until then they are merely scientifics or matters of knowledge" (*A. C.* 3057).

How doctrinals become matters of faith, and thus "are believed" by man, is clearly taught in what follows :—

(167.) "By the scientifics of the Church are meant all the knowledges of what is true and good, before these knowledges are conjoined with the interior man, or by the interior man with heaven, and thus by heaven with the Lord.

"The doctrinals of the Church are mere scientifics, until the man sees from the Word whether they are true, and thence appropriates them to himself" (*A. C.* 5402).

By "the doctrinals of the Church" is not meant

here the doctrine which descends from God out of heaven; but there is meant thereby the doctrine which the men, and especially the leaders of the Church, form to themselves by studying the truth revealed from God out of heaven.

Doctrine always enters into the mind first in the form in which it is received and taught by the teachers and doctors of the Church. And this doctrine the members of the Church must afterwards examine in the light of the Word of God, in order to see whether it is true or false, and that they may see doctrine, not from others but from themselves, in the light of the Word of God.

This is explained more minutely in what follows :—

(168.) “There are two ways of procuring the truths of faith—by doctrinals [from others] and by the Word.

“When a man procures them to himself only by doctrinals, he lends faith to those who have drawn them from the Word, and he confirms them with himself to be true because others have said so; thus he does not believe them from his own faith, but from the faith of others. But when he procures them to himself from the Word, and hence confirms them with himself to be true, he then believes them because they are from the Divine, thus from a faith derived from the Divine.” We read further :—“Every one within the Church first procures to himself the truths which are of faith from doctrinals [and thus from others], and he ought to procure them thus; for he does not yet possess the judgment requisite for seeing them from the Word. In this case, however, they are simply scientifics with him. But, if he is able to view them from his own judgment, and if then he does not consult the Word to see whether they are true, they remain with him as scientifics. But when he consults the Word from the affection and the end of knowing truths, and when he finds them, he procures the things of faith from a genuine fountain, and then they are appropriated to him from the Divine” (*A. C.* 5402).

On the same subject we read further :—

(169.) “At first the doctrinals of the Church are to be learned, and then an examination must be made from the Word, as to whether they are true ; since they are not true because the leaders of the Church have said so, and their followers affirm it ; for in this case the doctrinals of all churches and religions might be declared true simply from their soil and birthplace, and there would thus be truths not only of the Papists and Quakers, but also of the Jews and Mahometans, because their leaders have declared them to be so, and their followers affirm it. Whence it follows that the Word ought to be searched, and examination made therein as to whether doctrinals are true ; when this is done from the affection of truth, man is illustrated by the Lord, so that, not knowing whence, he notices what is true, and is confirmed therein according to the good in which he is” (*A. C.* 6047).

Again we read :—

(170.) “Those who are in the affection of truth for the sake of truth and for the sake of life, consequently for the sake of the Lord’s kingdom, have indeed faith in the doctrinals of the Church ; but they still examine the Word for the sake of truth alone, and hence is their faith and conscience. If any one tells them that they ought to remain in the doctrinals of the church in which they were born, they think that if they had been born in Judaism, Socinianism, Quakerism, Christian Gentilism, or even outside the Church, the same thing would still have been said by those who are there ; they remember also that it is said everywhere, Here is the Church, here is the Church, here are truths and nowhere else ; and as such is the case, they think that the Word ought to be examined with a devout prayer to the Lord for illustration” (*A. C.* 5432).

The broad question arises here, What is meant by the statement that “the doctrinals of the Church in which any one is born, or to which he belongs, ought to be examined by him in the light of the Word, in order to see whether they are true” ?

We have already seen (pp. 199 to 201) that when Swedenborg speaks of the Word of God, he means thereby not only its letter or its literal sense, but also

its spiritual sense. If therefore the doctrines of a Church which are preached from its pulpits are exclusively those of the letter or of the literal sense of the Word, the members of that Church ought to examine the doctrinals of their Church in the light of the literal sense of the Word. This applies to the members of the various Churches into which the first Christian Church has, in course of time, been divided. But if the doctrinals formulated and preached by a Church are derived not only from the general teachings of the literal sense, but also from the particular teachings of the internal sense, as is the case with the New Jerusalem Church, in that case the members of that Church have to examine the doctrinals adopted by their General Conferences and Conventions, and those which they hear preached from its pulpits, in the light of the doctrines of the internal sense, which have been revealed by the Lord out of heaven for the benefit of that Church (see No. 160).

That the Word may be explored in this twofold sense, is clearly taught in the following passage:—

(171.) “Among the priests and the men of the Church there are some who teach and learn the truths of the Church from the literal sense of the Word, and there are others who teach and learn them from the doctrine which is drawn from the Word, and which is called the doctrine of the faith of the Church. The latter differ from the former very much in perception, but cannot be distinguished by the common people, because both speak in a similar manner from the Word. But those who teach and learn from the literal sense of the Word, without any regulating doctrine of the Church, are able to comprehend only those things which belong to the natural or external man; while those who teach and learn from the true doctrine, which is from the Word, understand also those things which belong to the spiritual or internal man;

because the Word in the external or literal sense is natural, but in the internal sense spiritual" (*A. C.* 9025).

In addition to those who would derive infallible doctrine from the letter of the Word by virtue of their goodness or their celestial state, there are others who are under the impression that from their knowledge of correspondences they are able to see the spiritual sense of the Word without the help of the doctrines of the New Church. That these commence at the wrong end, is most clearly shown in the following passage :—

(172.) "No one can see the spiritual sense except from the doctrine of genuine truth. From this the spiritual sense may be seen when there is some knowledge of correspondences. But he who is in the doctrine of what is false cannot see anything of the spiritual sense. He draws and bends the correspondences which he knows towards the falsities of his doctrine ; wherefore he can falsify the Word still more.

"The truly spiritual sense of the Word is therefore from the Lord alone ; and this is the reason why no one in the natural or in the spiritual world is allowed to investigate the spiritual sense of the Word from the sense of its letter, *unless he be thoroughly in the doctrine of Divine Truth*, and in illustration from the Lord. Wherefore the spiritual sense may be seen from the doctrine of Divine Truth confirmed from the sense of the letter of the Word. But *doctrine can never be seen first from the spiritual sense*.

"He thinks what is false who says with himself : I know many correspondences, I may know the true doctrine of the Divine Word ; the spiritual sense will teach it to me. This cannot be done. But, as said above, let him say : I know the doctrine of Divine Truth ; now I may know the spiritual sense, provided I know correspondences. Yet even then he must be in illustration from the Lord ; because the spiritual sense is the very Divine Truth in its light, and is understood by the glory, while the sense of the letter of the Word is understood by cloud" (*De Verbo*, posthumous ; contained in *S. D.* vii. Appendix I. p. 104 ; see also *T. C. R.* 208).

From this it follows that no one is able "to make

to himself doctrine from the Word," or, in other words, to have the doctrine of the Word of God established in his mind, unless he has first acquired a thorough knowledge of the doctrine of Divine Truth. This doctrine, however, must afterwards be confirmed in his mind by the literal sense of the Word, according to this teaching :—

(173.) "All the power of Divine Truth is contained in the sense of the letter of the Word; in the spiritual sense without the sense of the letter there is no power; but there is in the sense of the letter in which is the spiritual sense" (*De Verbo*, posthumous; contained in *S. D.* vii. Appendix II. p. 74).

And again we read :—

(174.) "Every doctrine of the Church must be extracted from the literal sense of the Word and be confirmed by it, and not by the purely spiritual sense; for by this sense alone no conjunction is given with heaven, and by heaven with the Lord, but by the sense of the letter" (*De Verbo*, posthumous; contained in *S. D.* vii. Appendix II. Chapter V.)

This throws light on sermons, and the mode in which they ought to be prepared by ministers. In sermons the doctrines of the internal sense should be taught from the letter of the Word and be confirmed by it; and as the Lord is present in the letter of the Word, and not in the purely spiritual sense independently of the letter, therefore when the doctrines of the internal sense are preached from the letter of the Word, the Lord can be present with the hearers and illustrate their minds, and hence carry a much stronger conviction to their understandings.

With regard to the composition of sermons, however, we learn that the first thing a minister must do is to collect from the writings of our Church "the

doctrine of Divine Truth ;" *i.e.* instead of attempting to explain a text of Scripture from his own intelligence, or from an imaginary state of perception, he must go to the writings of our Church, and collect thence everything that is taught there respecting his text. After he is thus made acquainted with "the doctrine of Divine Truth," he is able to see the spiritual sense of his text "provided he knows the correspondences" which are employed therein, and provided "he is in a state of illustration from the Lord ;" and the only way by which he can come into a state of illustration from the Lord, is by humbling himself before Him, and imploring Him so to illustrate his thoughts that he may lead the minds of his hearers by truth to good (see *H. D.* 315). But concerning the perception which the Lord grants to those ministers of His Church who have been introduced into their office by the gate of ordination (see *T. C. R.* 146), we learn that it is not according to their state of goodness, but "according to the state of their minds as formed by doctrinals" (*Ibid.* 155); and we read further, that "where these doctrinals are true the perception is rendered clear by the light of illustration" (*Ibid.*) And in conclusion, we read, "Thus illustration, which is from the Lord, is turned into various kinds of light and heat, *with every one according to the condition of his mind*" (*Ibid.*)

CHAPTER X.

THE GENUINE USE OF REASON IN MATTERS OF THE CHURCH.

THERE are some New Churchmen who accept the theological writings of Swedenborg as authoritative, but who say they are free and open to all in the Church, so that every one is able to collect doctrine thence for himself. *A* consequently is able to collect doctrine thence as well as *B*; and the doctrine that *A* collects is just as true as that which is collected by *B* and *C*; but how, they say, can we know that the doctrine collected by *A*, which he claims to be the doctrine of the Church, is really true?

This reasoning proceeds on an assumption that the doctrines contained in Swedenborg's theological writings, or some of them, are not true; for truth is non-contradictory, and as soon as we declare that contradictory doctrines may be derived from Swedenborg's writings, we at the same time declare that God's truth is not there.

But how is it, it may be asked, that different persons derive different doctrines from these writings? The reason is either that they do not go to them in a free and unprejudiced state of mind, but seek instead to confirm their own notions from them; or, that they

draw their conclusions, and hence form their doctrines, from a mere cursory reading of these writings.

We must allow the writings of the Church to explain themselves, and then we shall never find any contradictions therein.

The case with doctrine, which strikes the eyes of the understanding, is exactly the same as with the objects which strike the eyes of our bodies. As doctrine is received differently, according to the conditions of men's understandings, so also the natural objects in this world appear differently to every individual ; for it is a common saying that no two eyes see alike. So, for instance, when a horse is exhibited to a certain number of individuals, each person receives a different impression of it in his memory, according as he directs his attention to particular parts of the horse. And yet they all agree that the object which they see is a horse, and not a cow, or some other animal.

Exactly the same is it with the doctrinal subjects of the writings of the New Church which are submitted to the gaze of the understanding. Some persons, according to the condition of their understandings, are able to obtain a clear and definite impression of a certain doctrine, while others can obtain from it merely a general or obscure idea. Yet whether that idea be clear or obscure, definite or general, the ideas produced by that doctrine on an unbiassed understanding will always be identical ; just as a number of persons looking at a horse will always agree that they see a horse, and not a cow or a dog.

It is different at night-time ; then it is possible that the same object at a distance may appear to one person as a horse, to another as a cow, and to a third person as a donkey. So likewise when the sight of the understanding is obscured either by some preconceived notions or some state of ignorance, or a perverted state of the will, then also a doctrinal subject which is presented before the understanding may make contradictory impressions on various persons. The contradiction in that case, however, is not in the doctrine or in the doctrinal treatises, but it is in the persons themselves.

This brings us to the genuine use of reason in matters of the Church or of doctrine. And here we must first of all lay it down as a general principle of our Church that the Lord desires man not only to think and speak, but also to reason on Divine things, so that he may see whether a thing is so or not. This principle is clearly enunciated in the following passage :—

(175.) “The angels of the third heaven never reason on Divine things, whether a thing be so or not ; but they see in themselves from the Lord that it is so or that it is not so. Reasoning concerning Divine things whether they are so or not is due to this circumstance, that the person who reasons does not see them from the Lord, but desires to see them from himself ; and what a man sees from himself is evil. But the Lord, nevertheless, desires man not only to think and speak, but also to reason concerning Divine things, so that he may see whether a thing is so or not. And, provided a man’s end is to see the truth, this thought, speech, and reasoning may be said to be from the Lord with man ; they are from man, however, until he sees and acknowledges the truth ; and meanwhile the only thing which he has from the Lord is the ability of thinking, speaking, and reasoning ; for this he is able to do by virtue of the two faculties, which are called freedom and rationality, and which man has from the Lord alone” (*D. P.* 219).

Again we read :—" By rationality is understood the faculty of understanding truths, and hence falsities, and goods, and hence evils " (*D. L. W.* 264).

Reason, therefore, enables a man to distinguish between truth and falsity, and hence to discover how much in a doctrinal presentation is true, and how much false. Reason, however, is not able to do this from its own inherent light; for reason, or the human rational, as we have shown (Chapter VIII., Nos. 134 to 136), is totally unable of itself to decide as to the spuriousness or genuineness of any teaching of the Church; in order to do so it must be enlightened by true doctrine drawn from the Word of God. It needs, therefore, a criterion or standard of the truth for its guidance.

Such a criterion of the truth all those have who believe in the Divinity and authority of the doctrines of the internal sense, and who on all questions touching the internal and external worship of the Church, and on all questions of doctrine, go to the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg for light and for help; for in going there they go to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as He has revealed Himself to mankind at His Second Coming.

Those, on the other hand, who deny the Divinity of the contents of these writings have no criterion of the truth at all; for they are obliged to decide all questions of doctrine either by the fitful and uncertain light of their own finite reason, or to appeal to the literal sense of Scripture, concerning which we read that "it may be bent in various directions, and explained according to the comprehension" (*T. C. R.*

260), and that "an immense number of heresies arise from the sense of the letter without the internal sense, or without the genuine doctrine of the Word" (*H. D.* 262 ; compare also Nos. 131, 132, and 133, in Chapter VIII.).

By declaring, however, the contents of Swedenborg's theological writings to be the criterion and standard of truth in the New Church, and by maintaining that human reason must be enlightened by true doctrine drawn from the Word of God, in order to enable it to distinguish between a spurious and a genuine teaching of the truth, we are far from denying the true position assigned to reason in the doctrines of the New Church ; yea, we hold that it is utterly impossible for man to make any progress in spiritual life if he neglect the proper use of this heavenly gift. We read :—

(176.) "Nothing can enter into a man's understanding without ideas from such scientifics as he has acquired from infancy. Man is altogether ignorant of the fact that every truth of the Church which is said to be of faith, is founded upon his scientifics, and that he comprehends it, keeps it in the memory, and calls it forth thence by means of ideas formed in him from scientifics" (*A. C.* 5510).

Again :—

(177.) "Man cannot receive anything unless he be able to have some idea respecting it from his rational. This may appear from the ideas which man revolves in his mind respecting Divine arcana ; for there always clings to them some idea from worldly things, or from things analogous to worldly things, by which these things are retained in the memory, and by which they are reproduced in thoughts, since man cannot think at all without ideas derived from worldly things" (*A. C.* 2520).

Further :—"When reflection is wanting nothing enters into the memory, as is well known. Suppose the human eye should take in thousands and thousands of objects, still the memory does not retain any

of these objects upon which man has not exercised his external reflection. In a similar manner also, when he thinks about that on which he has reflected, he remembers it. In short, nothing remains in man without reflection" (*S. D.* 2593).

It follows hence that man's thought, and hence his reason, which enables him to think and to reflect, must be actively engaged in order that any truth belonging to faith may be received in his mind; yea, we learn that unless he form to himself some idea respecting these truths from the things stored up in his memory, and from his rational, he cannot retain and reproduce these truths. Moreover, man must exercise his own thought on these subjects, and not receive his ideas blindly from others, or else these truths remain in the mere threshold of his mind, as appears plainly from No. 127, and also from the following passage which we have partly quoted at the beginning of Chapter VIII. :—

(178.) "Those of the spiritual Church desire that the things of faith should be believed simply without any intuition from the rational, not knowing that nothing, not even the most hidden thing of faith, can be seized by any man without some rational, yea, even natural idea, although he does not know the quality of this idea (*A. C.* 3310). They can, indeed, protect themselves thereby against those who reason respecting each and everything from a negative principle as to whether it is so. But to those who are in an affirmative principle respecting the Word, viz., that it is to be believed, such a position is injurious. For thus they may deprive every one of the freedom of thought, and may bind his conscience even to the most egregious heresy, thus ruling over a man's internal and external" (*A. C.* 3394).

We see, therefore, that the writings of the New Church are totally opposed to a blind, unreasoning reception of the truth, and that, while admitting a dogmatic assertion of the truth to be of use as a

defensive means against those who are of a negative spirit, it declares that such a course is positively injurious in the case of those who are of an affirmative disposition. In order that a truth may remain in the mind, and especially that it may be raised into the interior regions of the rational mind, man must exercise his own thought upon it, and must in particular define each truth clearly in respect to all opposing falsities, so as not to be carried away by a specious and insinuating course of reasoning. It is necessary also that a man's conviction of a truth should be the result of slow and sure growth, and that during its establishment in his mind it should be carefully considered on all sides. This is clearly taught in the following passage :—

(179.) “It is according to the laws of Divine order that no one should be persuaded of the truth in a moment, *i.e.* that a truth ought not to be so confirmed in a moment that no doubt remains. For a truth which is impressed in this manner becomes a persuasive truth, which bears no extension, and does not yield in any respect. When, therefore, in the other world, some truth is presented before good spirits by living experience, there is at once something opposite presented which causes a doubt. Thus an opportunity is given to them of thinking and reflecting whether this is so, and of collecting reasons, and hence of introducing this truth into their minds in a rational manner. Thus there is caused an extension of spiritual sight, in respect to this truth, even to its opposites” (*A. C.* 7298).

This shows the use of discussions on doctrinal subjects ; only the discussions must be carried on in an affirmative spirit, and objections ought not to be raised from the mere love of debate and controversy, but from the love of seeing the truth. Controversy closes the way to wisdom and intelligence, as appears plainly from the following passage :—

(180.) "As long as any one remains in a state of controversy, and asks whether a thing exists, or whether it is so, he can never make any progress in wisdom. For in the very thing which is controverted are innumerable things which can never be seen, so long as they are not acknowledged, because all things in general and particular relating thereto are ignored. Modern erudition scarcely proceeds any further than to the limits of whether a thing exists, or whether it is so, hence also they [*i.e.* those cultivating it] are excluded from the intelligence of truth. So he who simply discusses whether there is an internal sense of the Word can never see the innumerable, nay, the indefinite things which are in the internal sense. And what is wonderful, those who are such consider themselves wiser than others, and wiser on this account because they can discuss better whether a thing is so, and confirm better that it is not so. When yet the simple, who are in good, and whom they despise, without strife and controversy can perceive at once that a thing is so, and also what is its quality. They have common sense by which to perceive truth, but the others have extinguished that sense by such things as they were desirous previously to discuss" (*A. C.* 3428).

The teaching contained in Nos. 175 to 179 prove conclusively that the writings of the New Church are averse to dogmatism, and that they totally reject the dogma that "the understanding is under the obedience of faith." Yet the writings of the New Church are not on that account opposed to the acknowledgment of an authority in the New Church, by which the reason of its members ought to be governed and directed; yea, they insist most strongly that the members of the New Church ought to accept these doctrines because "they are continuous truths revealed from the Lord by the Word," and that they ought to limit the exercise of their reason to a "confirmation" of these doctrines "by the Word" and "by rational things" (see No. 130).

From the fact, therefore, that, according to No. 176, "every truth of the Church is founded on

scientifics, and that it is comprehended and kept in the memory by ideas formed from scientifics," it does not follow that this truth is derived from scientifics, or is the product of rational thought, and by means of this thought is drawn from the scientifics of nature.

Again, from the fact that, according to No. 177, "man cannot think at all without ideas derived from worldly things," and that "such ideas continually cling to his ideas respecting Divine arcana," it does not follow that worldly ideas contribute in the least towards the generation of spiritual truths, but only that man's ideas of spiritual things are confirmed and clothed by natural scientifics, or by ideas derived from worldly things, while the spiritual ideas or the spiritual truths themselves come to him only by revelation.

Nevertheless, it does appear as if some of the statements quoted from Swedenborg's theological writings in Chapter VIII. did conflict with what has been quoted from these writings in the present Chapter. So we read in No. 128: "Doctrine becomes nullified in proportion to the human, *i.e.* to the sensual, scientific, and rational from which it is believed to be so; but in proportion as doctrine is believed without these in the same proportion it lives;" and again, in No. 129, "Intellectual truth does not appear, *i.e.* is not acknowledged, as long as man reasons concerning the very truths from sensual and scientific things; only when man believes from a simple heart that a thing is true, because the Lord has said so, the shades of fallacies are dispersed with him, and it no longer matters to

him whether he comprehends a thing or not ;” while it is said in No. 177, “ Man cannot receive anything unless he be able to have some idea respecting it from his rational ;” and in No. 178, “ Nothing, not even the most hidden thing of faith, can be seized by any man without some rational, yea, even natural idea ; to those who are in an affirmative principle it is even injurious to hold that the things of faith are to be believed simply, without any intuition from the rational ; for thus every one may be deprived of his freedom of thought, and his conscience may be bound even to the most egregious heresy ; and thus both his internal and external may be ruled over.”

In the former of these passages, it is said that “ everything sensual, scientific, and rational, must be removed from doctrine that it may live,” and “ intellectual truth appears to man only when he believes from a simple heart that a thing is true because the Lord has said so ;” and in the others it is said that “ nothing, not even the most hidden thing of faith, can be seized by any man without some rational, yea, even natural idea.”

These two apparently contradictory teachings are perfectly reconciled by the following passage :—

(181.) “ It was perceived that knowledges of faith must at first be confirmed by sensuous and natural truths ; for man cannot believe anything without confirmation. After these knowledges, however, are confirmed, man is gifted by the Lord with conscience, so that he may believe without confirmations. He then rejects all reasonings ; this is the angelic sphere in which evil spirits cannot be. As long as man, however, is in the state of confirmation about these things, and as long as he reasons concerning them, in order to convince others of the truths, such spirits are able to be present. It is almost the same with

him who is in principles, as he rejects all reasonings against principles, and is even indignant when any one disputes them" (*S. D.* 3977).

Here we see that the latter passages, or Nos. 177 and 178, have reference to man in the beginning of reformation and regeneration, when it is impossible for him "to believe anything without confirmation by sensuous and natural truths;" but that the former passages, or Nos. 128 and 129, relate to a more advanced state of regeneration, when conscience is established in him, and he sees the truth from the Lord without confirmation.

We see also that the first state is a step to the second ; but that in order to reach the second state it is absolutely necessary for the man of the Church to stop reasoning as to whether Divine Truths be true or false ; that, therefore, from the very first he must struggle against the desire to raise objections against Divine Truth, and must strive to receive its teachings in an affirmative state of mind. Then also he will have a criterion and standard of the truth by which he will be enabled to judge of the truth or falsity of the doctrinal teachings of the teachers and leaders of the Church ; and in time, if he receive the doctrines of the Church not only in the understanding, but also in the will, he will be gifted by the Lord with conscience, and be able to see the truth not from himself, but from the Lord, and hence not in natural, but in spiritual light.

The true position of reason in the New Church is not therefore to examine the revealed doctrines of the internal sense in the light of rational, scientific, and sensuous things with a view of testing their truth ;

but it consists in starting with these doctrines as true, and in confirming them by rational, scientific, and sensuous things ; it consists also in looking upon these doctrines as a criterion of the truth, and by comparison therewith in judging of the falsity or reality of the doctrines advanced by the teachers and other intelligent members of the Church.

Whenever the reason of the men of the Church entertains any doubt respecting the doctrines of the Church, it transgresses its limits ; for, though it is fully justified in questioning and examining in the light of the doctrines of the New Church all the conclusions drawn from these doctrines by the men composing the Church, it is not justified in questioning and judging of the truth of these doctrines themselves. This is not done even by those who are in a state of illustration from the Lord ; for we read concerning them, "The illustrated intellectual [faculty] discerns between apparent and real truths, especially between falsities and truths, *but it does not judge of the truths themselves in themselves*" (A. C. 7233).

The *first* duty of a New Churchman, therefore, in respect to the use of his reason in matters concerning the Lord and His kingdom, and thus in all matters concerning spiritual subjects, is to acknowledge the Divinity of the doctrines contained in, and derived from, the Word of God, and, consequently, the Divinity of the doctrines of the New Church which are "continuous truths revealed from the Lord by the Word" (see No. 130). And by acknowledging the Divinity of these doctrines is meant, that he must look

upon them as the criterion or standard of the truth in the New Church which must never be questioned, but confirmed by rational, scientific, and sensual things. That such is the teaching of the doctrines of the New Church, and hence the teaching of Swedenborg, has been proved throughout the whole of Chapter VIII., especially in Nos. 127, 129, 130, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 145; in addition to these passages we now quote the following :—

(182.) “Those who are in the faith of charity do not reason respecting the truths of faith, but declare a thing to be so, and also confirm it, as much as they are able, by the sensual and scientific, and also by the analytical, things of reason. As soon, however, as anything obscure occurs which they do not perceive, they reject it, and never allow it to create doubt in them, saying that there are very few things which they are able to comprehend, wherefore they declare it to be a mark of insanity to say that a thing is not true because they do not understand it. These are in charity.

“Those, however, who are not in the faith of charity are only desirous of reasoning whether a thing be so, and they desire to know how it is, saying that unless they know how a thing is they cannot believe that it is so. From this circumstance alone it is known that they are not in faith, and this, moreover, is an indication that they not only entertain doubts on everything, but also that they are in denial at heart. When they are instructed how a thing is, they still cling to their doubt, and raise all scruples against it, and never rest to eternity. Those who are in this doubting principle heap therefore errors upon errors. These are called *drunken*, and *filled with strong drink* in the Word” (*A. C.* 1072).

Nevertheless there are many in the world who cannot see truths independently of scientifics, and who need these scientifics to strengthen their faith; concerning these we read :—

(183.) “By Zebulon are not understood those who do not believe unless scientific and sensual things dictate. Those who start with

a negative state never believe, because a negative principle reigns universally with them, and when it reigns universally, negative scientifics, and not such as confirm, are collected. Those which confirm are thrown towards the side, and are explained so as to favour the negative scientifics, and in this manner the negative principle is corroborated.

“By Zebulon, however, are understood those *who believe the doctrinals from the Word*, with whom therefore an affirmative principle reigns universally, and yet faith with them has not life in truths, but in scientifics; for they apply scientifics to doctrinals, and thus strengthen their affirmative principle. They, therefore, do not elevate themselves above scientifics, but when they hear or think a truth of faith they at once fall into what is scientific. Of this nature there are many in the world; the Lord also provides that scientifics and sensuals shall be of use to them” (*A. C.* 6383).

Again we read:—

(184.) “A man who is worldly or corporeal at heart says, unless I am instructed concerning faith, and the things belonging to faith by the things of the senses, that I may see, or by scientifics that I may understand, I am not willing to believe; and he confirms himself by this consideration, that natural things cannot be opposed to spiritual things. He, therefore, desires to be instructed in celestial and Divine things from the things of the senses, which yet is as impossible as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The more he desires to be wise from such things, the more he blinds himself, even to such a degree that he believes nothing, not even that there is spirit and an eternal life. This flows from the principle which he has adopted. This is meant by *eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil*, and the more any one eats of this tree, the more he becomes dead.

“But he who does not desire to be wise from the world, but from the Lord, says at heart, that we must believe the Lord, *i.e.* those things which the Lord has spoken in the Word, because they are truths, and he thinks from this as a starting-point. He confirms himself by things rational, scientific, sensual, and natural, and those things which do not confirm he separates” (*A. C.* 128).

(185.) “The more any one consults natural scientifics, and clings to them with his exterior and interior mind in respect to the truths of faith, the more he loses the light of truth, and with the light the life of truth. Every one, if he attends and reflects, may know this from experience, from the case of those who say that they cannot believe, unless by

sensual and scientific things they comprehend that a thing is so. If you explore them as to their quality, you will find that they believe nothing, and further that nothing appears wiser to them than to attribute each and everything to nature.

“There are also many who say that they believe, although they do not comprehend, and who nevertheless in secret with themselves, just like the others, reason from sensual and scientific things concerning the truths of faith whether they be so. These have either a certain inflated principle from the love of self and of the world, or they believe nothing at all. Their quality appears from their life” (*A. C.* 2852; compare also *A. C.* 233, 4760).

The *second* duty of New Churchmen in respect to the use of reason in matters of doctrine, as we have seen repeatedly throughout this Chapter and Chapter VIII., is “*to confirm*” the doctrine drawn from the Word of God by “rational, scientific, and sensual things.”

A truth of doctrine is confirmed by *rational* things when it is logically connected with other truths, according to the following teaching:—

(186.) “One truth without connection with other truths is not confirming; there must be several in connection, then one may appear from the other. One does not produce a form, hence not a quality, but several connected in a series; for as one tone does not make a tune, still less a harmony, so neither does one single truth constitute a truth” (*A. C.* 4197).

Again, a truth of doctrine is confirmed rationally by having instilled into it the particulars of doctrine belonging to it, as is taught in the following passage:—

(187.) “External, *i.e.* general, ideas which are not yet illustrated by least particulars are infirm and vacillating, and suffer themselves to be carried away by every wind, *i.e.* to be inclined to any opinion; but when they are illustrated by these particulars, then they become firm and obtain consistency; for from these they derive both what belongs to their essence and their form” (*A. C.* 3820).

The process of instilling the particulars of doctrine

into its generals is brought about by collecting together all those passages of the writings which have a bearing upon one another, and which illustrate the same general principle ; and further, by digesting all these passages into one grand whole by a process of co-ordination and subordination. That this process must take place in order that the Church may be established, is taught in what follows :—

(188.) “The establishment of the Church takes place as follows : first of all the doctrinals of good must be collected into one—for upon these the building is to be erected. There exists also a connection between the several points of doctrine, and they have respect to one another ; wherefore, unless they be first collected into one, when a deficiency arises, it will have to be supplied from man’s own rational ; and how much this is blind and visionary in spiritual and Divine things has been shown above. For this reason the Word was given to the Church, in which are all the doctrinals of good and truth ” (*A. C.* 3786).

The work of digesting into one the doctrinals of the Church is the special work of the ministry, who, by their training, and the gift of the Holy Spirit by their ordination (see *T. C. R.* 146), are fitted in an orderly manner thereto. Hence we read that “the *laity* are in the externals [or generals] of the doctrine of the Church, and the *clergy* in its internals [or particulars]” (*A. R.* 567 ; compare also *A. R.* 398, 403, and 404).

The doctrine of the Church is confirmed besides by *scientifics*, both by such as are derived from the letter of the Word (*A. C.* 6832), and also by such as are the result of a study of the various objects and relations in the natural world. That the doctrine of the Church is to be confirmed by the letter of the Word, appears from what follows :—

(189.) "Doctrine must not only be drawn from the sense of the letter of the Word, but also be *confirmed* by it ; for unless the truth of doctrine is confirmed by the letter of the Word, it appears as if only the intelligence of man, and not the Lord's Divine Wisdom, is contained in it ; doctrine also in this case would be like a house in the air and not upon earth, and thus it would be without a basis" (*T. C. R.* 227).

The confirmation of truth by scientifics of either kind is by no means an easy task, and it can be done only by those who are in an affirmative state of mind, and who at the same time possess the requisite intellectual capacity, as appears plainly from the following passage :—

(190.) "Consulting scientifics concerning Divine Truths is seeing from them whether they are so. This takes place in a different manner with those who are in an affirmative state that a truth is true. When these consult scientifics, they confirm the truth thereby, and thus corroborate faith. It is different with those who are in a negative state : when these consult scientifics, they cast themselves more into falsities ; for a negative principle reigns with them, but an affirmative principle with the former.

"Besides, this is according to the intellectual faculty with every man. If any one has not a higher, *i.e.* an interior intuition, when he consults scientifics, he does not see the confirmation of truth in them, wherefore he is carried off by scientifics into a negative state. But those who have a higher, *i.e.* an interior, intuition, see confirmations, and if not otherwise, still by correspondences" (*A. C.* 4760).

The difficulty of confirming truths by scientifics arises from the fact of their being acquired in the light of nature, wherefore they appear sometimes opposed to truths ; but when scientifics are subordinated to truths, and hence illuminated by the light of truth, then this apparent discrepancy vanishes, as is proved in what follows :—

(191.) "Scientifics are general vessels which appear sometimes

opposed to truths, before truths are instilled into them, and they are made transparent thereby, so as not to appear. Besides, scientifics are full of the fallacies of the senses which cannot be removed by those who are in mere knowledges from doctrine, and are not in the perception of truth from good; and especially for this reason that the light of the world prevails with them, which appears clear as long as the light of heaven does not flow into it; but as soon as the light of heaven flows in obscurity takes the place of light. Hence those who are in scientifics are enlightened in the things of the world, but obscure and dull in the things of heaven.

“Those, however, who are in the light of heaven are in illustration from the Lord, and before confirmation apperceive by inspection of the scientifics which are below, and arranged there in order, whether the truth may be confirmed or not, *i.e.* whether it agrees. It hence appears that the latter have an interior intuition, which is above the scientifics and distinct; but the others a lower intuition, which is among the scientifics, and thus which is perplexed” (*A. C.* 6865).

The only scientifics, however, by which spiritual truths are actually confirmed, and which by the insinuation of spiritual truths “become transparent as it were, so as not to appear,” are correspondences, as has been mentioned already in No. 190; this is further corroborated in what follows:—

(192.) “All things of faith and love have with them an idea from such things as man knows; for without an idea from knowable and sensuous things man cannot think with himself; and man then thinks justly even of those things which are of faith and love, when he thinks of them *from correspondences*. For correspondences are natural truths in which, as in mirrors, are represented spiritual truths. Wherefore, in proportion as ideas of thought concerning spiritual things are formed independently of correspondences, in the same proportion they are formed either from the fallacies of the senses, or from incongruous things” (*A. C.* 9300).

The moral conditions, upon which the illustration from the Lord depends by which the men of the Church are confirmed in truths, are described in the following passage:—

(193.) "The confirmation of truths takes place by illustration from the Lord when man studies the Word with the end of knowing truths. Those who are in externals without an internal cannot be illustrated, and hence cannot be confirmed in truths. But when those who are in externals, and at the same time in internals, read the Word, they are illustrated, and in their state of illustration see truths in which they are afterwards more and more confirmed; and what is surprising, every one has illustration in proportion to his affection for the truth, and his affection for the truth is according to his good of life. Hence also it is that those who are not in the love of the truth for the sake of truth, but for the sake of gain, are not at all illustrated when they read the Word, but are only confirmed in their doctrinals whatever their quality may be, whether heretical, or altogether opposed to truths; for they do not seek the Lord's kingdom, but the world; not faith, but fame; thus not heavenly, but only earthly riches. If they be perchance inflamed by the desire of knowing truths from the Word, falsities offer themselves to them in the place of truths, and finally they come into a denial of all things" (*A. C.* 7012).

In this passage is described the illustration, which is according to the good of love in man, and which affects both clergy and laity alike; but with the clergy, we are taught, there is in addition a special illustration which is conveyed to them by the inaugural rite into the ministry (see *T. C. R.* 146, 155, and *Canons*, Holy Spirit, Chap. IV., Nos. 7 to 9); and by this special illustration they are protected in the exercise of their office, and are elevated into superior light, and are thus gifted with that higher intuition, which is spoken of in Nos. 190 and 191, by which they are enabled to see the truth of doctrine before confirming it by the letter of the Word and by natural scientifics. That such a protection and illustration from the Lord are absolutely needed by the Lord's ministers in order that they may conscientiously discharge the duties of their calling, may appear from a thoughtful consideration of the following passage:—

(194.) "Spiritual things can be comprehended as well as natural things WHEN THEY ARE HEARD OR READ, but with difficulty by the man himself *when he thinks from himself*" (*D. F.* 3).

Congregations, therefore, when they *hear* the doctrine of the Church preached, or when they *read* it, comprehend it as well as they do natural things ; but the ministers whose business it is to exercise their thought upon the doctrine of the Church, and to confirm it by rational and scientific considerations, experience greater difficulties. For when a man simply hears or reads, his understanding only becomes affected ; and as his understanding is separated from his will, he may be raised as to his understanding even into the light of angels (*T. C. R.* 79). It is different, however, when he exercises his own thought upon a subject of doctrine ; for then he flows with his will into his understanding, and it is the will that thinks in the understanding. Man's own thought, therefore, is always more or less tinged by that which is his own, and on that account it is compared in the writings to an eagle which flies high up in the air, but as soon as it discovers a quarry below, shoots down and devours it (*Intercourse* 14 ; *T. C. R.* 590). Man, therefore, ought not to think from himself on matters of doctrine ; he ought never to collect information on such subjects from himself, but ought always to go to the writings of our Church, and thus to the Word ; for all the doctrines in these writings are drawn from the Word. On this account also the ministers in the New Church are enjoined in the writings of our Church "to teach men according to the doctrine of their Church from the Word" (*A. C.* 10,794 ; *H. D.*

315), and even "in heaven," we read, "the preaching is in agreement with the doctrines" (*H. H.* 221). As long, therefore, as the ministers and the members of the Church in general think and speak on spiritual subjects from doctrine, and not from themselves, so long they are preserved from falling into error and falsity; but in proportion as they go to themselves, and not to doctrine, for information, in the same proportion their presentation of doctrine becomes erroneous and more or less false.

It is because man's thought is almost certain to be led astray when "he thinks from himself" on matters of doctrine, that the candidates for the ministry are introduced into their office by a representative rite which is perceived in heaven; and it is by influx into this sign, which remains impressed upon them, that their understanding is capable of being protected by the Lord from the evils of their own will, while they are in the exercise of their office. Wherefore we read that "by the inauguration into the ministry there are conveyed to the clergy the gifts belonging to their office, which are illustration, perception, disposition, and instruction;" but concerning perception we read further, that "it is according to the state of a man's mind as formed by doctrinals," and concerning illustration, that "it is turned into various kinds of light and heat, with every one according to the condition of his mind" (*T. C. R.* 155; see also 146), and further, that "illustration with every one is according to the state of knowledges with him (see Chap. VI., Nos. 60 to 63).

That man is in an altogether different state when

he *hears* and *reads* than when he *thinks from himself* on doctrinal matters, is demonstrated still more clearly in the following statement of doctrine taken from *D. L. W.* 361 :—

(195.) “There is a difference between knowing from common perception [or from common sense], from thought, and from writing about a thing. A thing well understood by common perception is confused when a man exercises his thought upon it, because thought communicates with the sight of the body; and it is still less comprehended when a man writes about it, for then the thought communicates with the sensual degree, which is a man’s own or his *proprium*. Hence it is that some can think and speak well, and still not write well; this } is common with the female sex. By submitting a thing to thought man recedes from common perception; and if he writes concerning it from thought, he confirms it by appearances and fallacies, and by words of mere sound and no import. Hence it is that many of the learned who have thought much, and still more those who have written much, have weakened and obscured, yea, even destroyed, common perception [*i.e.* common sense] in themselves; and that the simple-minded see more clearly what is good and true than they who consider themselves wiser. This common perception is caused by influx from heaven, and falls into the thought, and thence into the very sight, but thought separate from common perception falls into the imagination from the sight and from *proprium*.”

We see from this statement how dangerous it is for those who are unwilling to be directed by doctrine to think and write on doctrinal subjects; for they fall invariably into errors and falsities of doctrine. We see also how important it is that they who set themselves up as teachers and leaders of the Church should have the greatest veneration for the doctrine revealed from heaven for the benefit of the Church, and that they should always “teach in accordance with the doctrine of their Church from the Word,” whether they teach orally or by the pen, and that, on account

of their proneness to error, they should not neglect the Divinely-appointed means by which their understanding may be in illustration from the Lord while they are in the performance of their sacred office.

As the ministry in the Church, *i.e.* those who have been introduced into the ministry through the orderly gate of ordination, are capable of being protected by the Lord while in the performance of the duties of their office, *i.e.* while meditating, writing, or preaching on doctrinal subjects, and hence while "teaching from the Word the doctrine of the Lord, of redemption and salvation by Him," therefore also we read:—

(196.) "Good may be instilled into another by any one in the country, but not truth, except by those who are *teaching ministers*; if others do so, heresies spring up, and the Church is disturbed and torn in pieces" (*A. C.* 6822).

The ministers of the Church, however, although protected by the Lord in the performance of the duties of their office, are not gifted thereby with infallibility, and their clearness of vision is troubled whenever they allow themselves to be carried away by the impulses of their own unregenerated wills, and especially by the desire of ruling over others, which so often manifests itself in a dogmatic mode of teaching; and also whenever they do not "first collect into one all the doctrinals of the Church" before attempting to set forth the teaching of the Church in sermons, and thus when they endeavour to explain these teachings in the light of their own rational (compare No. 188). If, therefore, a minister at any time should attempt to force his own teachings upon his hearers without proving their truth by "the doctrine of his

Church from the Word," then the latter ought to address him in the language of the angel which is quoted in No. 196:—"Do you consider yourself God, whom we ought to believe, or do you believe us so insane as to believe an assertion in which we do not see any truth? Cause us to see the truth!"

In discovering the truth or falsity of a minister's teachings, his hearers have an advantage over him in this respect, that in *hearing*, the understanding may be separated from the will and raised into the light of heaven; and if they continue in a prayerful and docile state of mind, they may be illustrated by the Lord so as to perceive clearly where the minister is right, and where he is not. This perception, however, they enjoy only so long as they are not in a critical mood, and do not test the minister's teaching by their own preconceived ideas on a subject, but weigh it impartially in the light of the evidence which he adduces from the doctrine of the Church, and thereby from the Word. For as soon as they think on any subject from themselves, *i.e.* from their own preconceived ideas, their mind is closed against the common perception from heaven, and they are more or less under the influence of the fallacies of the senses, because "thought communicates with the sight of the body." But, if under the influence of these preconceived ideas they *write* on the subject, they not only expose themselves to the fallacies of the senses, but "their thought descends even into the sensual degree of their soul, where their own, or their *proprium* is," and then they are filled with hatred against him who

holds a different doctrinal view from themselves, and they become personal and vindictive.

Let all, therefore, upon approaching the doctrine of the Church, remember that they stand on holy ground, and that they are utterly unable to see the truth of doctrine from themselves, but only from the Lord; and that if they would see the truth from the Lord, they must approach the doctrine which is drawn from the Word in an affirmative, and not in a negative, frame of mind.

From this it follows that there is no authority inherently in the ministers of the Church, not even by virtue of the office which they fill, but that all authority is derived to them from the doctrine of Divine Truth which is contained in the literal and spiritual senses of the Word, and which they are commissioned to teach and preach to the members of the Lord's Church upon earth.

As long as they loyally teach and preach this doctrine, and by means of it endeavour to lead the members of the Church to the good of life, so long "they are good shepherds" (*H. D.* 315), and the Lord prospers the work of their hands. But as soon as ever they swerve from the path of duty, and seek after popularity, having more respect to the will of man than the will of God; or, if, instead of calling men to repentance, they confirm them in their evils and falsities by pandering to their selfishness and worldliness; if, therefore, they do not lead the members of the Church to the genuine good of life which consists in shunning one's evils as sins against God, and if, instead of leading men to the Lord, they make them personal followers of themselves, then "they are bad

shepherds" (*H. D.* 315), and instead of building up the Lord's Church they weaken and destroy it.

The Church can be built up only by following closely the doctrine of the Lord as taught in the internal and external senses of the Sacred Scripture; but if men place their own doctrine in the place of the Lord's doctrine, or if they place themselves above the Lord's doctrine by denying its supreme authority, they may indeed build up an outward semblance of the Church, but within it will bear the seed of decay and dissolution, according to the following teaching of the Lord :—"Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (*Matt.* vii. 24-27).

All that has been said here in respect to the ministers or priests, who are defined in the writings of our Church as "the superiors or heads who are to administer those things which belong to Divine Law and to worship" (see *Chap. I., No. 3*), applies also to all others who exercise dominion and authority in the Church, and hence it applies in an especial manner to the general governing bodies of the Church called conventions and conferences.

These bodies, so far as they administer "those things which belong to Divine Law and worship," are just as much under "the doctrines of their Church" (*H. D.* 315), which are derived from the Word of God, as the ministers and priests are; and if they violate these doctrines, or substitute their own doctrine for them, they are just as much to be blamed as the ministers are when they violate these doctrines.

The will of men, whether it be that of an individual minister, or of a majority of ministers and laymen in convention assembled, counts absolutely nothing in matters of "Divine Law and worship." The will of men, unless directed by infallible and Divine doctrine, comes from below and not from above, and therefore the Church is wrong if it allows itself to be governed by it.

Ministers, and conventions or conferences of the Church, however, establish the truth of their assertions in matters of "Divine Law and worship," by showing the consonance of their teachings and enactments with Divine doctrine, or by basing their own doctrines and regulations exclusively on such doctrine. For human reason, as we have repeatedly shown, unless instructed by doctrine revealed from heaven, is totally unable of itself to determine what is right and wrong in matters of the Church, *i.e.* of the Lord's Kingdom.

Much mischief has been wrought by introducing into the deliberative and governing assemblies of the Church the usages by which men are governed in their political assemblies. The final authority of our Church is not in men, but in the doctrines of the internal sense of the Word which the Lord revealed at

His Second Coming. And, again, the authority of our Church *is* vested in men, yet only in proportion as they allow themselves to be ruled and governed by these doctrines. Majorities, therefore, may rule and carry the day in political assemblies, and also in Church bodies, so far as they do not legislate on matters belonging to "Divine Law and worship;" but in all questions belonging to internal and external worship (see Chap. I., No. 4) the will of the majority, so far as it is opposed to the spirit and letter of the doctrines of the Word, comes from below, and on that account can no more expect to be permanently respected in the Church than the falsities of hell can expect permanently to rule and govern the Lord's Church on earth.

The will of men, by nature, is always arrayed inimically against the will of God, wherefore in the establishment of the Lord's Church on earth no dependence whatever can be placed on the will of men, but only on the doctrines of our Church. And woe to those ministers and priests who, in the exercise of the duties of their calling, lean upon men, and not upon God's truth; for concerning them we read: "Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, unto all that trust in him" (2 Kings xviii. 21).

If the question is asked, What is the duty of the Church not only in respect to the doctrines taught by its ministers, but also in respect to those enacted in the form of regulations by its deliberative assemblies?

we declare that this duty is clearly taught in Chapter VIII., No. 169; which passage for convenience' sake we transcribe here in full:—

“At first the doctrinals of the Church are to be learned, and then an examination must be made from the Word as to whether they are true; since they are not true because the leaders of the Church have said so and their followers affirm it: for in this case the doctrinals of all churches and religions might be declared true simply from their soil and birthplace, and there would thus be truths not only of the Papists and Quakers, but also of the Jews and Mahometans, because their leaders have declared them to be so, and their followers affirm them. Whence it follows that the Word ought to be searched, and examination made therein, as to whether doctrinals are true; when this is done from the affection of truth, man is illustrated by the Lord, so that, not knowing whence, he notices what is true, and is confirmed therein according to the good in which he is; *if these truths differ from the doctrinals, then let him take heed, lest he disturb the Church*” (A. C. 6047).

Here the member of the Church is enjoined to examine the doctrinals of his Church in the light of the Word. By the doctrinals of the Church are here meant, on the one hand, those taught by the ministers, and on the other, all such enactments in matters of doctrine and worship as have been passed and adopted by the conventions and conferences of the Church.

These doctrines are not true because the ministers have preached them in their pulpits, neither are the enactments true because the Church assemblies have by

a majority of votes declared them to be so. Unless these doctrines and enactments can be shown to harmonize with the doctrines of the internal sense, and thus with the law of our Church, the ministers have no right to expect their doctrines to be accepted by the people, nor have our conventions and conferences a right to expect that their rulings will be respected by the Church.

Still, we read in the passage quoted above, If the member of the Church finds that "the truth as he discovers it in the Word," *i.e.* in the authoritative doctrines of the internal and external sense of the Word, "differs from the doctrinals, let him take heed lest he disturb the Church."

Should the members of the Church, therefore, find a discrepancy between the doctrines of the internal and external senses of the Word as perceived by themselves, and the teachings of their ministers, or the enactments of their conventions and conferences, then let them be careful, lest in calling attention to it they "disturb the Church," or in other words, lest they injure the function of the minister and of the General Convention or Conference in their midst. In calling attention to such a discrepancy the members of the Church, therefore, must be "prudent as serpents, and simple as doves" (Matt. x. 16).

From this it may be seen how very important it is that not only the ministers of our Church, but also the members of our general Church bodies, should be directed by a true and genuine understanding of the doctrines of our Church.

In the case of the ministers, the Church by the

institution of proper theological seminaries takes care that its ministers should be instructed and trained in the genuine understanding of its doctrines; and our conventions and conferences provide for a proper understanding of the doctrines of our Church on the part of its members, by submitting to a committee, consisting of its most learned and experienced ministers, all points that have reference to "Divine Law and worship." These points, however, are not to be submitted to such a committee for final settlement, but for a preliminary investigation in the light of the doctrines of our Church. This committee in fact should be called upon to declare the law of our Church on such points; and after the law has been established by this committee from the writings of our Church, these points should be recommitted by them to the General Conference or Convention for final action.

That this is the orderly course to be pursued by our general Church bodies in legislating on points of "Divine Law and worship," is clearly proved by the following extracts from a letter addressed by Swedenborg in 1770 to the Swedish universities of Upsal, Lund, and Abo:—

(197.) "I have been informed by two gentlemen of the privy or executive council, that the privy councillors or senators are *pontifex maximus*, to which I then gave no answer. Should I still hear such assertions from them, I would answer, that they are by no means *pontifex maximus*, but *vicarius vicarii pontificis maximi*; because Jesus Christ our Saviour is the only *Pontifex Maximus*; the various Houses of the Realm are His *vicarius*, wherefore they are answerable to Him, and the privy councillors or senators are the *vicarii* of the Houses of the Realm; because they are appointed by them, and hence they are *vicarius vicarii pontificis maximi*. That the Pope of Rome called himself

pontifex maximus, is of arrogance, because he has taken and assumed to himself all the power of Christ our Saviour, and placed himself on His throne, making the people believe that he is Christ upon earth. Every inferior *pontifex* or *vicarius pontificis maximi* ought to have their consistory. The Houses of the Realm have their consistory in the House of the Clergy, and the privy council has its consistory particularly at the universities."

From this letter it follows that :—

First, "Jesus Christ is the *Pontifex Maximus*," or the supreme authority in the Church. The Lord, however, is made the supreme ruler in the Church when we regard His Word, and the doctrines of the internal sense which He has revealed at His Second Coming as the law, and hence as the supreme authority in our Church.

Secondly, Our general conventions and conferences are the "*vicarius Pontificis Maximi*," and thus the Church in convention assembled is hereby authorized to act as the Lord's representative or as His *vicarius* in this world. It is worthy of remark here that Swedenborg does not designate the ministers or the House of the Clergy as the *vicarius Pontificis Maximi*; but all the four Houses of the Swedish Diet, viz. those of the peasants, the burghers, the clergy, and the nobility; and hence that he declares a mixed body of laymen and ministers, such as our American Convention and our English Conference, to be the supreme power in the Church under the Lord Jesus Christ, *i.e.* under His Divine Truth, which is contained in the Word of God, and in the doctrines of the internal sense which are drawn from the Word of God. This same statement Swedenborg reiterated to his friend Robsahm in the following words: "The

House of the Clergy is not the only judge in matters of religion, inasmuch as religion belongs also to the other houses" (see "Documents," etc., vol. i. p. 38).¹

Thirdly, The Executive Council or Committee of a Convention or Conference, which is potentially in session throughout the year, and which again must be a mixed body of laymen and ministers, is the "*vicarius vicarii Pontificis Maximi*," because it is appointed by the general body of the Church. It is responsible to that body, because appointed by it, and it acts under the same law, to which the general body of the Church itself has sworn allegiance.

Fourthly, "Every inferior *pontifex* or *vicarius Pontificis Maximi* ought to have its consistory." By a consistory is meant here a general advisory committee of clergymen, whose business it is to declare the law of the Church, that is, the teachings of the doctrines of the internal sense, on all questions concerning "Divine Law and worship" that are submitted to the General Convention or Conference, or to their Executive Council for adjudication. The ministers of the Church, therefore, are not only members of the general conferences and conventions, and of their executive councils, but they should form also an advisory board of the conventions and conferences of the Church on all points that concern "Divine Law and worship," or internal and external worship. The advisory board of the executive council, however, according to Swedenborg, ought to consist of the professors of the theological seminaries.

¹ See also vol. ii. p. 355, where Swedenborg shows that "theological matters belong to the other houses also."

This plan of the general organization of the New Church Swedenborg himself submits to our consideration, and we earnestly call upon our brethren in the Church to take this plan seriously into consideration, and to adopt and constantly act upon it : for only thus, and in no other way, shall we be able to establish the Lord's truth as the law of our Church, and only thus will the Church escape the selfish rule of men, whether laymen or priests.

If now, in conclusion, it should be asked, What of those men in the New Church who refuse to acknowledge the doctrines of the internal sense contained in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg as the supreme law of the Church? We answer that laymen are, in this respect, differently placed from ministers.

If any, for instance, deny the plain teaching of our Church that the Lord has, in and by the doctrines of the New Jerusalem published by His servant Emanuel Swedenborg, effected His Second Coming (see Chap. II., No. 6), they in respect to that doctrine are in the denial of the truth, and are more or less confirmed in the opposite falsity, that these doctrines are the mental product of Emanuel Swedenborg. To such men, if they are laymen, the following teaching of our Church applies: "He who believes differently from the priest, and does not make disturbances, ought to be left in peace ; but he who makes disturbances ought to be separated ; for this also is agreeable to order, for the sake of which the priesthood is established" (*H. D.* 318). If such a person is a minister, the following teaching from *T. C. R.*

784 applies to his case: "It is agreeable to Divine order that a New Heaven be formed before a New Church on earth. . . . In proportion as this New Heaven, which constitutes the internal of the Church with man, increases, in the same proportion there will descend out of heaven the New Jerusalem, *i.e.* the New Church. Wherefore this cannot be effected in a moment, but in proportion as the falsities of the former Church are removed. For the new cannot enter where falsities have formerly been rooted, unless these be removed, *which must take place with the clergy, and thus with the laity.*"

From this passage it follows that the New Jerusalem will descend out of heaven in proportion as the opposing falsities are removed "from the clergy, and thus from the laity;" and it follows further that the New Church will be established on earth by means of the clergy. If now the clergy in the New Church profess and teach doctrinal views which are opposed to the plain teachings of the doctrines of our Church, they profess and teach falsities, and thus to a greater or less extent obstruct the descent of the New Jerusalem out of heaven, and also cause disorder and dissension in the Church, wherefore obstructive and "disturbing" ministers must likewise be separated.

The dangers which beset the Lord's New Church are many and various; for the powers of darkness are ever striving to prevent the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom on earth. None understand the power of the Lord's Divine Truth better than evil spirits; and they are fully aware that where the Divine Truth is accepted as a final authority, their own power is

broken and annihilated (see No. 145). Many and various, therefore, are the means and subterfuges to which they resort in order to invalidate Divine Truth in the sight of New Churchmen; even as we read, "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very *elect*," *i.e.* those among whom the Lord establishes His New Church. The faith of New Churchmen, therefore, is never safe unless it is firmly based on this acknowledgment, that the Lord effected His Second Coming in and by means of those works which He wrote through His servant Emanuel Swedenborg (No. 10); that these works, therefore, are of Divine and not of merely human authority; and that no apparent contradictions or other outward flaws in the text of these works can detract from their Divine authority.

Courage is required in order to carry out to its legitimate conclusions the principle that the Lord effected His Second Coming in and by means of the writings of the New Church, and that hence they come to us with Divine authority, and partake of the nature of infallibility. This courage, however, sometimes fails New Churchmen who are otherwise brave, and who give evidence that they fear God more than men. In the elevation of their rational thought, while speaking and teaching from the doctrine of our Church, they acknowledge that the Lord effected His Second Coming through the instrumentality of Swedenborg. They therefore abstractly believe and lay down premises which, when pushed to their legitimate logical conclusions, demand infallibility for those writings

which the Lord wrote and published through Swedenborg ; yet when they descend from their rational into their natural thought, and when they are confronted with those writings which are the natural embodiments of the Lord's doctrine in respect to His Second Coming ; and especially when the thought of their natural man points out to them apparent contradictions in these writings, or differences between its teachings and those of natural science, doubts begin to arise in their minds, and their faith is like Peter, *who staggered and sank* when he had no longer faith in the Divine authority, and hence in the infallibility of the Divine Truth, *i.e.* of the Lord Himself, who was Divine Truth incarnate.

Our object has been to protect and defend the doctrine of the Lord's Second Coming, as taught in the writings of the New Church, when exposed to the ingenious reasonings of the natural man, by which the Divine authority, and hence the infallibility, of those writings, in and by which the Lord effected His Second Coming, is invalidated and denied.

May we express a hope that we have realized our object, and that our work may strengthen in the minds of New Churchmen the conviction that the Lord has indeed effected His Second Coming by the writings of the New Church, and that in these writings we have an infallible criterion and standard of the truth, and at the same time a supreme law which all the members of the Church may acknowledge without giving up in the least degree their freedom and rationality. May our work, therefore, be instrumental in contributing its share to the establishment of the Lord's New Church on earth !

APPENDIX.

SWEDENBORG ON THE LORD'S ADVENT.

WHILE this volume was passing through the press, a discovery of great importance was made, which must prove, at least in the eyes of all those who accept Swedenborg's testimony, the principle we have sought, in the preceding pages, to establish from the writings of the New Church.

In No. 13, p. 19, the following statement is recorded which Swedenborg made in a "Sketch of the History of the New Church" included in the reproduction by photo-lithography of his MSS. (vol. viii. p. 1): "Upon all my books in the spiritual world was written The Lord's Advent (*Adventus Domini*). The same I also inscribed, by command, on two copies in Holland."

One of these copies has lately been discovered, bearing the following inscription:—

HIC LIBER EST ADVENTUS DOMINI, (2513) (*A. R.* 626).

SCRIPTUM EX MANDATO. { 4535 }
 { 6895 }

(8427, p. 19).

(This Book is the Lord's Advent,
written by command.)

The reference to the *A. R.* 626 is not in the handwriting of Swedenborg, but in that of a subsequent owner or reader of the book. The title of the work is *Summaria Expositio Doctrinæ Novæ Ecclesiæ* (A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church), and it is on the original wrapper of it that the inscription is written. There are four works, all of them the original Latin editions, bound in one volume, viz.: (1) *Swedenborg's Letter to the Rev. J. Hartley, containing his Autobiography*; (2) *The Intercourse between the Soul and the Body*; (3) *A Brief Exposition of the Doctrine of the New Church* (containing the above inscription); and (4) *The True Christian Religion*. The two former were published in London in 1769, and the two latter in Amsterdam in 1769 and 1771 respectively. This volume, which no doubt once belonged to Swedenborg's own library, is now the property of Mr. James Speirs, 36 Bloomsbury Street, London.

The above statement requires no comment, since it declares in so many words that in and by the books written through Swedenborg the Lord made His Advent into this world. They are therefore the Lord's works, and not Swedenborg's, and they hence come to us with a Divine, and not a merely human authority. Besides, as "the Lord's Advent" is written *on all Swedenborg's books in the spiritual world*, and as he does not make a distinction in favour of those books which he himself published, it follows that the Lord effected His Coming also by the *Spiritual Diary*, the *Apocalypse Explained*, and all the other books that are in the same category with these works.

Such, therefore, is the testimony which Swedenborg himself bears, not only in respect to the *doctrines* contained in his writings, but also in respect to the identical books which he wrote; for he declares expressly that the BOOKS THEMSELVES constitute the Lord's Coming, and he says further that he wrote the above inscription by Divine command.

Let us now examine the passages which accompany this important statement, which are all taken from the *Arcana Cœlestia*.

(1.) "The coming of God signifies perception; for perception is nothing else than a Divine advent, or a Divine influx into the intellectual faculty" (*A. C.* 2513). If this passage be read in conjunction with the inscription which it serves to illustrate and to confirm, it teaches that the Lord made His Second Advent in Swedenborg's intellectual faculty, and that He thereby imparted to him the gift of perception; and further, that under the influence of this perception Swedenborg wrote all those books in and by which the Lord effected His Second Coming in this world. But that the Lord's Advent, which was first made in Swedenborg's intellectual faculty, and which imparted to it perception, was continued also into the very books which he wrote, is proved by the fact that "on all his books in the spiritual world was written *The Lord's Advent*, and that the same he also inscribed by command on two copies in Holland." The above inscription, therefore, serves in the place of a Divine seal, which Swedenborg, the servant of the Lord, was instructed to imprint on these books, and by which he was to declare to the members of the Lord's New Church, for whom these works were written (see No. 161), that they are the Lord's books, and not Swedenborg's. The above passage has never before, to our knowledge, been used to explain the nature of the Lord's Coming and its connection with the state of Swedenborg's inspiration.

(2.) "Those who have some faith in respect to the internal sense are able to see manifestly that by the New Heaven and the New Earth is understood a New Church, which will follow when the former Church passes away (see Nos. 1733, 1850, 3355), and that Heaven means its internal, and the Earth its external. The last time of the former Church, and the first of the New Church, is also called the Consummation of the

Age (concerning which the Lord spoke in Matt. xxiv.), and likewise His Advent ; for then the Lord withdraws from the former Church and comes to the new " (*A. C.* 4535). In this passage the continuation of what precedes is described ; for after the Lord had made His Advent in Swedenborg's intellectual faculty, and " through him " (No. 10, p. 18) had written those books on which, in the spiritual world, was inscribed " The Lord's Advent," by means of the doctrines contained in these books He establishes a New Church on earth which " will follow the former Church after this passes away." And this passing away of the former Church, from which " the Lord then withdraws," as well as the establishment of the New Church, to which " the Lord then comes," is likewise understood by the Lord's Advent. For further particulars respecting the establishment of this New Church, which " will be called the New Jerusalem," and " into which those of the former Church are invited," see No. 160, p. 202.

(3.) " By the Lord's Advent is understood His acknowledgment in the hearts by love and faith (see Nos. 3353, 3900), as well as His revelation (*apparitio*) out of the Word, the inmost or supreme sense of which treats of the Lord alone (No. 4060); this advent is understood by the Lord's Advent, which takes place when the Old Church is rejected and a New Church instituted by the Lord " (*A. C.* 6895). Here the Lord's Coming to the individual man is described ; for we learn that by the Lord's Advent is understood " His acknowledgment in the heart by love and faith." We learn also that the New Church is instituted by the Lord when " the Old Church is rejected ;" from which it follows that in order that the New Church may be established by the Lord in the hearts of men " by love and faith," the Old Church, *i.e.* the falsities and evils which constitute the Old Church, must first be rejected ; and further, that only in proportion as men thus " reject the Old Church" will the Lord be able to institute a New Church among them.

(4.) " "And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 10, 11, 23) ; here the glory of God stands manifestly for light from the Lord, which is the Divine Truth proceeding from Him, and thus the Lord's presence ; for the Lord is present in the Truth which is from Him. That the Lord as to the Divine Truth is the glory, appears also in Num. xiv. 21, 'I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah,' where by the glory of Jehovah is meant the Lord's Advent

and illustration from the Divine Truth which is from Him" (*A. C.* 8427, p. 19). Here the final effect of the Lord's Advent is described, where, as we read, it causes the Lord's presence and illustration by the Divine Truth. This is the effect of the Lord's Coming with those who receive the truths contained in the works of Swedenborg, on which, in the spiritual world, is written "The Lord's Advent;" and who, enlightened by these truths, reject the evils and falsities of the Old Church, and acknowledge the Lord "in their hearts by faith and love." These, and none others, are capable of seeing the Lord in His glory and of being illustrated by His presence, as appears from No. 161, pp. 202 and 203.

APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS IN THE WRITINGS OF THE NEW CHURCH.

(1) In the *A. E.* 118, we read, "'And the poverty, but thou art rich;' that this signifies an acknowledgment that from themselves they know nothing, appears from the signification of poverty, which means an acknowledgment of the heart that from themselves they know nothing, concerning which see hereafter; and also from the signification of *but thou art rich*, which signifies the affection of spiritual truth, concerning which see hereafter."

In the *A. R.* 95 the same passage is given thus: "'And the affliction and poverty,' signifies that they are in falsities, and hence not in good." And at the close of the paragraph we read, "There are also added these words, *But thou art rich*, yet in parenthesis, and for this reason because they are omitted in certain codices" (*in quibusdam codicibus*).

Which codices are meant here Swedenborg does not explain; but from the fact that these words exist in all the known codices of the Sacred Scripture, and

especially in the *Codex Sinaiticus*, which is the oldest known MS. of the Bible—some New Churchmen claim that Swedenborg was here in error. Or, they say, suppose a codex should be discovered which lacks these words, in this case Swedenborg in the *A. R.* would contradict Swedenborg in the *A. E.*; because in the former book he plainly regards these words as parts of Scripture, and gives their spiritual meaning, while in the latter work he excludes these words from the text, and does not give their spiritual meaning. In either case, they say, Swedenborg contradicts himself, and thus to the same extent shows that his writings do not contain the pure truth.

To this conclusion we are by no means disposed to accede, for the simple reason that the facts of the case, as presented above, admit of a different explanation, which completely reconciles this apparent contradiction. Suppose Swedenborg by his expression "in certain codices" alludes to the original codices written by the Apostle John himself, and sent by him to the seven churches in Asia; for these seven churches had a real existence in Asia, and the Apostle John, who understood his prophecy only in a literal, and not in a spiritual sense, in order literally to fulfil the words of his prophecy, must have sent a copy of his revelation to each of the churches, to "the angel of which" he was directed to write. On these grounds we consider ourselves fully justified in assuming that the Apostle John wrote several codices of his prophecy, in "certain" of which the words "but thou art rich" are omitted. But how could Swedenborg be made

acquainted with this fact? By the Apostle John himself, whom he states that he met in the spiritual world (*T. C. R.* 339).

If, however, John wrote these words in "certain" of his codices, and not in others, it must have been for a spiritual reason; and this reason unquestionably was, that in one aspect of the spiritual teaching of this passage, as given in the "Apocalypse Explained," these words are required; but not in that other aspect, which is presented in the "Apocalypse Revealed" (concerning the difference between these two works see p. 151). Yet even in the latter work Swedenborg does not say that these words are falsely interpolated, but simply states that these words "are added, but in parenthesis, because they are omitted in certain codices."

Besides, if these words had been simply omitted by a copyist, either by negligence or design, Swedenborg would have ignored their omission, as he did in many other cases, where passages are left out in some of the oldest copies of the Word, *e.g.* in the case of the doxology in the Lord's Prayer, which is omitted in the *Codex Vaticanus* and the *Codex Sinaiticus*, but is quoted and explained without any further remark by Swedenborg in *A. E.* 48.

The very fact, however, that Swedenborg ignored all the omissions and various readings originating with the copyists, lends additional weight to the idea that in the present case his statement refers to words having been left out in "certain" of the original codices written by the Apostle John himself, and not in codices which were the work of copyists.

(2) In *A. C.* 931, we read, "It hence may also appear that the earth will not last to eternity, but will also have its end; for we read '*during all the days of the earth,*' i.e. as long as the earth is."

In *L. J.* 1, however, we read, "But, nevertheless, let them know now, that neither the heaven, which is visible before our eyes, nor the habitable earth, will perish; but that both will endure" (*quod utrumque permansurum sit*).

Here it is maintained that Swedenborg contradicts himself, because in one passage he declares that "the earth will not last to eternity," and in another that "the habitable earth will endure."

This contradiction exists only in the English translation, and not in the original Latin; for in that language different expressions are used for the English term "earth." In the first passage we read that "the earth (*tellus*) will not last to eternity," and in the second that "the habitable earth (*terra*) will endure." There is, however, a difference between the Latin words *tellus* and *terra*; for the former is used to designate a planetary orb, in which sense it is constantly used by Swedenborg; but the latter word, viz. *terra*, is employed in describing the soil or the earth on which we stand, wherefore it is also used in the sense of "land." While Swedenborg therefore in one passage declares that "our orb" will not last to eternity, in the second passage he says that the "habitable land," or the natural world in general, which is inhabited by men, will endure. On this account, he also says, in *L. J.* 6, "Because the destruction of the *world* is not understood by the day of the Last Judgment, it

follows also that the human race will continue, and that procreations will not cease."

As to the statement, however, which Swedenborg made in *A. C.* 931, viz. that "our orb will not last to eternity," this statement is made in the Word of God itself; for Swedenborg says expressly that it is so stated in the Word itself, where we read, "'during all the days of the earth,' i.e. as long as the earth is."

The point that the author intended to make here is this, that the earth will not from anything intrinsic in it last to eternity, but that its continuance is dependent on a contingency, which in the same passage is described thus, "The earth (*tellus*) ceases to be inhabited when there is no longer any Church; for when there is no Church, there is no longer any communication between man and heaven; and when this communication ceases, every inhabitant perishes. The Church, as stated above, is like the heart and the lungs in man; as long as the heart and the lungs are whole, man lives, hence also as long as there is a Church in respect to the Grand Man, which is the universal heaven: wherefore it is here said that 'during all the days of the earth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.' It hence appears also that the earth (*tellus*) will not last to eternity, but will also have its end; for we read '*during all the days of the earth*,' i.e. as long as the earth is" (see also *L. J.* 10).

It was our object to collect in this Appendix all the contradictions with which the theological writings of

Swedenborg have been charged, and to explain their trifling character. But after examining carefully all these charges, only the two we have adduced seemed to be of sufficient importance to deserve formal refutation; the rest vanish when examined in the original Latin, or else they are of too insignificant and flimsy a nature to be seriously entertained except by such as deny at heart the Divinity of those writings on which the Lord instructed His servant to inscribe, "This book is the Lord's Advent;" or such as are unwilling to subject the finite reason of man in Divine and spiritual things to the Divine, and hence to the infallible doctrine of revealed Truth. The ground which the New Church occupies in respect to these and other alleged contradictions is clearly stated in the preceding pages from pp. 48 to 50, and also in Nos. 137 to 145 (pp. 183 to 188).

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